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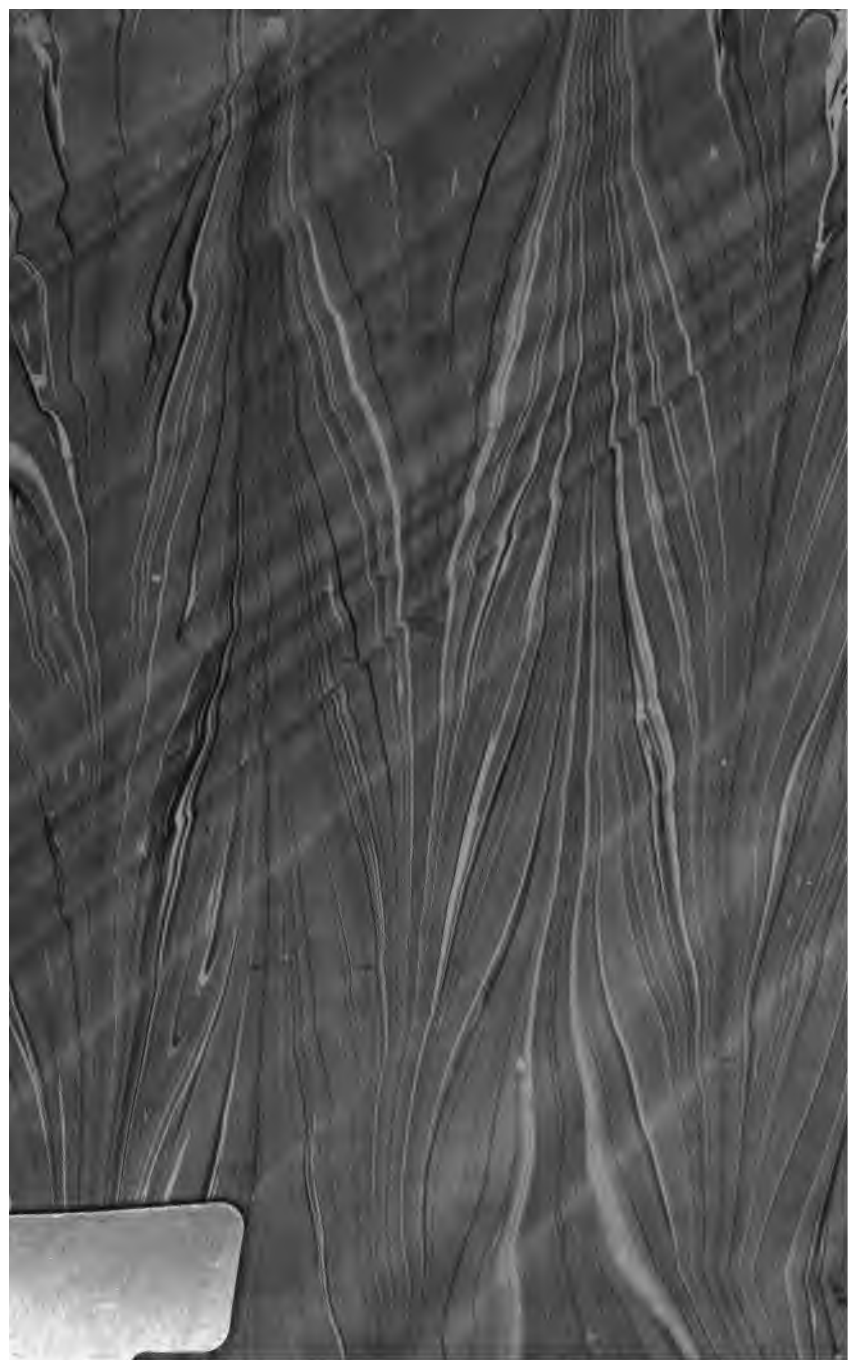
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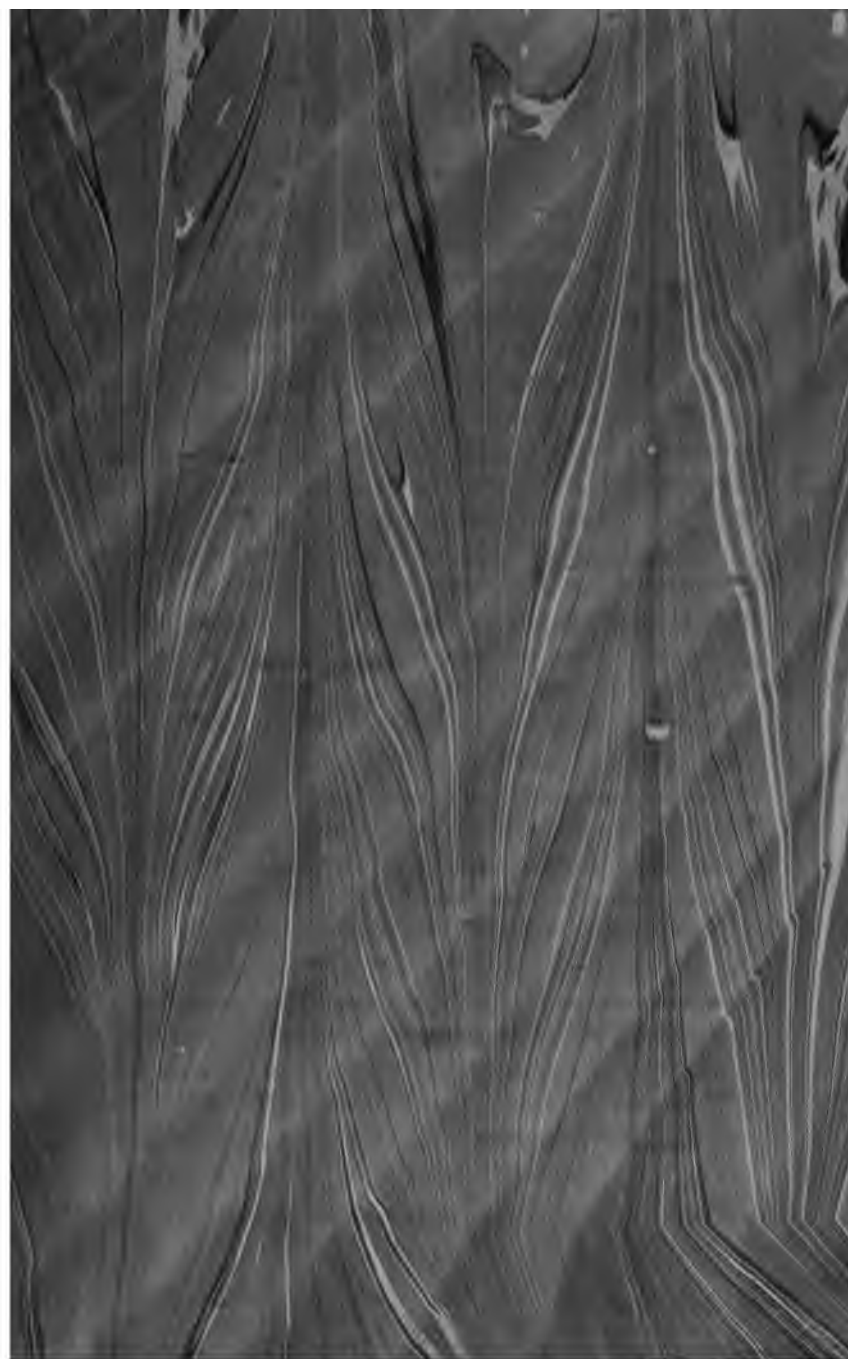
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Scenes!

SCENES AT WASHINGTON;

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STORY OF THE LAST GENERATION.

BY

A CITIZEN OF BALTIMORE.

NEW YORK:
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS.

1848.

MRS

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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1848, by
HARPER & BROTHERS,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the
Southern District of New York.

SCENES AT WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

"FOOL! fool!" she cried, stamping her little foot violently on the floor, as she entered the room, and throwing her beautiful head into its loftiest attitude.

"Who is it, sister, you are honoring with that fine epithet?"

Instead of a reply, the same expressions were repeated, while the face of the speaker betrayed evident marks of agitation from something she had just heard.

"Well, but what is it? Perhaps if you tell me, in giving vent to your ill-humor in words, you will find some relief: anyhow, you will save your foot which, as you are using it, is in some danger of bruises, at least."

"Why, there is Dr. Leslie down stairs, and I have just heard him tell mamma that his nephew Charles is become religious. What a fool! who would have thought it? The last thing I could have supposed would have entered into his thinking head!"

"You take it very much to heart, anyhow, sister; and I see how it is plainly enough. After all your by-play with

Mr. Dickens and others, it is clear that you like Charles better than you do any of them : or, why else do you show this irritation ? However, if you will only keep in your present mood, it will be all the better for me, for you know that Charles promised to wait for me, provided I would be a sober girl, and learn to be a good housekeeper. But compose yourself. Charles's father has died lately, you know, and he is expected from Washington to see his mother : we can then have from himself the reasons for his conduct."

"Reasons, indeed ! He is a fool, I tell you, Agnes, or else he is crazy, and I don't care which,—it is nothing to me."

"As to his being a fool, this is the first time I ever heard you say anything like that of him, nor do I, for myself, feel disposed to think he is crazy."

"He has certainly got an able advocate in you, Agnes, and I advise you to make haste and perfect yourself in housekeeping : you can then remind him of his promise. But seriously, this is a bad affair. Religion, to be sure, is a thing very much to be desired when one is going out of the world ; but while we are in the full possession of its splendors and favors, *c'est une autre chose*. Charles is certainly a great fool to resign all these, and connect himself with a demure sort of folks, who think it a sin to laugh. Besides, I suppose he must bend that tall and elegant figure down to the lowly slouch of humility. It is too ridiculous ! And then, too, he must lose caste, and what a loss to society. Very few men can talk like Charles Leslie. And further, he will never dance again ; but that is of no con-

sequence, for I never liked to see him dance. Then only I could laugh at him ; but as soon as he led his partner to her seat, his high bearing commanded my respect again. Dancing, I see, is suited to boys and girls only. A man that can talk, ought never to dance ; but if he cannot talk at a party or a ball, I give my consent that he make himself less ridiculous by dancing."

" Ah, sister," said Agnes, laughing, " you have made a long speech, and convinced me that this is indeed a sad affair."

" It is nothing to me. The world is made up of all sorts of people : what one society loses, another must gain. I have just begun to look at one side of it, and it is fair and promises much. I leave Mr. Charles Leslie to look at the other."

This conversation passed some time in the year 1807, between two sisters, Clara and Agnes Sydenham.

Mr. Sydenham was one of our old patriots, who warmly espoused the cause of his native country, in her great struggle for Independence. Having borne arms in support of the principles which he clearly saw were his birth-right, he contributed also by his counsels and efforts to form and set in motion the new government of Maryland. After the peace of 1783, he intermarried with Miss Clara Courtenay, a descendant from the gentleman of that name, who came as one of the first settlers in our state, in the train of Lord Baltimore. The ladies of our old families were of a style, and manners, and principles, as unlike as superior to those of the present generation. Modesty, dignity, reserve, were their principal characteristics. When brought into com-

pany, the young aspirant was taught as well the courtesy of her own sex towards the other, as the deference and respect which the other was bound to pay to hers. Even in their amusements, the same modesty and reserve were perceived ; for in the grave minuet, the lady was seen moving in the figure slowly, and at a distance from her partner, and when it was over, he led her to her seat by the tips of her fingers. What would women then have thought of the wanton, licentious waltz ! Education, in every way, in those days, was to fit young women to make useful mothers ; and not by a system, enervating both mind and body, disqualify them utterly for the discharge of those sterner duties which must always follow the mere dreams of our youth. Mrs. Sydenham was eminently a lady of those olden times, many of whom, at the period this narrative begins, were still alive in Maryland, showing to the rising generation of women in the new republic what women had been under the colonial government. The family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Sydenham, Clara and Agnes, and Frederick, a promising lad of fifteen, then at college. The eldest daughter had died two years before.

Clara, just nineteen, was a character of no common order. Without being critically beautiful, her features were strongly attractive, while her manners threw around her a grace which was altogether irresistible by those whom she wished to please. This, however, she was not always disposed to do. Her pride was excessive ; but her judgment was excellent, and her sensibility of the acutest kind. Thus constituted by nature, with her education embellished by the accomplishments which were then beginning to be

general in society, and her principles formed by her mother, this interesting girl commenced a life whose trials were to be as severe as they were extended through years.

Agnes was just seventeen : a rose yet in the bud, but giving the fairest promise of expanding into surpassing loveliness : and such, time proved her to be. Gentle and beautiful being, thou wert, indeed, a flower that bloomed and died too soon !

Clara already had many admirers ; but keenly sensitive to whatever was not correct in manners, or striking in intellect, the gay beaux who fluttered around her were oftener the subjects of her ridicule for their deficiencies, than claimants upon her preference, from their admiration. But amongst the many who were in her train, she found Charles Leslie very little disposed to flatter her. Deeply attached to her, and, of course, jealous of all who approached her, he never failed to show off all her admirers little to their advantage, or to censure her own behavior, if it did not exactly meet his fastidious ideas of grace and propriety. The consequence was repeated quarrels, which, though they convinced Clara that Charles felt an interest for her, had not as yet made her aware of the extent of his feelings, nor did he believe that she had any for him, beyond those of respect for his character.

Charles Leslie, also, was a descendant from two of the oldest families that had emigrated to our state. His grandfather, by the maternal line, was an agent for the Lord Proprietary at an early period of the revolution, but had left no sons. His grandfather, by the paternal line, was a Scotch physician of eminence in his profession, who had

married in his adopted country soon after his arrival, and, when the war of Independence commenced, it found him with his sons engaged against the king. Charles was the only son of the eldest, who had just deceased.

As the two sisters closed the conversation already related, their servant girl entered the room, and requested their attendance in the parlor, where a gentleman who had just come, wished to see them.

Upon entering the room, they found Charles Leslie seated on the sofa with Mrs. Syndendam, and conversing with her, but she soon retired after the sisters came in. His countenance bore marks of the recent bereavement in his family; and his deportment, though easy and natural, showed a mental chastening, correcting in some measure his usual flow of spirits. He rose from his seat at their entrance, and, giving a hand to each of the sisters, expressed the pleasure he had in meeting them after an absence of more than a year. "How much you are improved, Clara, as to externals," he said; "are you as light-hearted and giddy as ever?"

"That she is, Charles," said Agnes. "What do you think she made Mr. Dickens do the other day? I told her I would let you know of it."

"Something *outré* enough, as the French say, I am sure. But what was it, Agnes?"

"Why, Mr. Dickens was paying his usual morning attendance last week, and making his way into sister's good graces by all the flourishes he was capable of. Amongst other conversation, he asked her opinion of the cut of his new coat."—

“ ‘A new coat,’ said sister, ‘and a very handsome one it is, too ; it shows off so well the fall of your shoulders,’—(which you know, Charles, are remarkably broad and high) ‘walk across the room, Mr. Dickens,—turn round—round again,’—(sister all the time looking very demure)—‘the skirts are too long—too long by four inches,’ she said ; ‘it destroys the symmetry and grace of the whole figure : the skirts must be cut.’

“ ‘Cut, Miss Clara ?’ said Mr. Dickens, in alarm.

“ ‘Certainly, they must be cut four inches shorter,’ said sister, ‘or the height and grace of the figure will be destroyed entirely. Look, Agnes, do not these long skirts make Mr. Dickens look like an ordinary man ?’

“ ‘I have no taste, sister,’ I replied, ‘in these matters, and you know you will not allow that I have any even in my own dress.’ I now began to pity poor Mr. Dickens, for I saw that his really handsome coat was doomed.

“ ‘But he still held out. ‘You are surely jesting, Miss Clara,’ he said. ‘My tailor assured me that this was the handsomest coat he had ever turned out of his shop.’

“ ‘A tailor’s taste !’ said sister. ‘Perhaps the coat had laid in his shop a year, made for some one who refused to take it on account of the long skirts. No gentleman of taste would be seen with it on in the streets.’

“ ‘How much did you say must be cut off ?’ inquired Mr. Dickens.

“ ‘Four inches, at least,’ replied sister.

“ ‘Have you a pair of scissors, Miss Clara ?’

“ ‘I don’t know that I have,’ replied sister, carelessly, and walking off.

“‘Stay, Miss Clara,’ said Mr. Dickens, taking a pair of scissors from my work-basket, ‘and direct me what to cut.’

“‘I direct nothing about it, Mr. Dickens,’ said sister. ‘Pray, don’t spoil the handsomest coat your tailor ever made. I only said that the skirts reach four inches beyond the line of grace.’ I saw a smile playing around her mouth, and mischief in her eye, as Mr. Dickens, using the scissors, the proscribed four inches soon lay on the carpet.

“‘Now, Mr. Dickens,’ said sister, ‘go and show yourself in Fair street.’ Off he went accordingly, leaving her in a violent fit of laughter. Mamma scolded her for it, and the only excuse she had was, that ‘she always helped her friends to sustain the character they chose to sport, and as Mr. Dickens had chosen folly, she had only helped him to the badge.’”

“This is a novel mode of winning a lady,” said Charles, “and, I must needs say, an expensive one. I congratulate you, Miss Clara Sydenham, that your love of admiration has supplied you with such a new mode of amusement, and that you are content to have admirers, though you make them appear like fools.”

“Content to have admirers!” she replied, with a toss of her head, and her face flushed at the implied censure. She then determined to vindicate herself, though, from an innate sense of propriety, feeling, at the same time, that she had not acted altogether right.

“You appear, Mr. Leslie,” said she, “to sympathize with Mr. Dickens for the ludicrous appearance he must have made; but to be compelled to find entertainment for an

hour every morning for a man without an idea beyond his docket and fee, is a tax which I will not pay to the vanity or pretensions of any one. Everybody is expected to bring into society some talent, intelligence or grace, to add to the general fund of interest or amusement ; but when a buffoon intrudes, good taste and refinement must not be compromised : he must be dismissed, and if the *cut oblique* will not do, the *cut direct* must be used. As to the expense, you may be sure that Mr. Dickens will not fail, in order to make up his loss, to trim his next client as close as he did his coat."

Charles saw that Clara had been hurt by his remark, and taking her hand, said, " You have defended yourself ingeniously, I admit, but your tell-tale face shows plainly all the while that you are not insensible to the injury you have done to Mr. Dickens's feelings."

" You mistake the matter altogether," she replied. " Mr. Dickens has no feelings that could be aroused to the high bearing of the gentleman."

" If you will have it so, then be it so," said Charles. " But in making him ridiculous in so strange a mode, are you not lowering your own dignity ? When will you be a woman in your views and conduct ?"

" When I am a woman : as yet I am in my teens only."

" And there likely to remain," was the grave answer.

" Mr. Charles Leslie, that is no business of yours," replied Clara. " See to your own conduct before you make so free with mine. Recollect the flirtation you kept up with your cousin Christina,—how you engaged her in a correspondence—amused yourself in your own sober man-

ner, as I suppose you would call it,—then tired of it—and very likely now employ your leisure moments at Washington in the same agreeable way, with some one else.”

“I plead guilty,” said Charles, “to writing twice to Christina, and deny all the rest. Flirtations, as I believe you call them, are not according to my principles or taste. My cousin had fine sense, a cultivated understanding, and was very agreeable in conversation: but I had no feelings for her other than those of a near relative, and I am very sure that such a thought as cutting off the skirts of my coat never entered into her head.”

“You must permit me,” replied Clara, “to believe just as much of all this as I see proper; and as to the skirt-cutting, which you will be harping upon, I am not answerable to you for my behavior to any of my captives. I have a right to treat them as I please, and I will.”

“And if you cause a gentleman,” said Charles, “to spoil another coat, I shall say you behave very badly.”

Here the fair girl lost all patience. “Mr. Leslie,” said she, “it is a long time since your absence has released me from animadversions upon my manners. I might have hoped that, at last, you had learned that you have taken a liberty which I find irksome.”

“I don’t care if you do,” said Charles. “Say what you please, but I will find fault if you give cause. I have too much regard for you to leave you to yourself, especially,” (added he smiling,) “seeing how little able you are to go alone. But as I am not in a disposition just now for a quarrel, I wish you a pleasanter morning in future. Adieu, Agnes; your French will give you the meaning of the

word." So saying, he took up his hat, and, bowing to the two sisters, left the room.

He was barely out of hearing when Clara exclaimed, "Was there ever such another vexing fellow as Charles Leslie?—always finding fault with me! And such a selector of words! 'Too much regard for me,' he says. Any other word I could have made something out of,—of that, nothing. Never mind, wait a little: I will see if I cannot bend him yet into somewhat of the shape I make others take at my bidding."

"I doubt it, sister," said Agnes. "Charles Leslie, I see plainly, is stiffer than ever. You are playing a difficult game, and present probabilities are, that you will lose it."

Charles Leslie was descending the flight of steps which led to the street. "Proud girl!" he muttered to himself, "it shall go hard with me, but I will teach you something of yourself you do not yet know. But I must see my uncle; my new principles may gain strength from his counsel and experience; and, in truth, I see already that this attachment will test them cruelly, I fear, and long."

He then wended his way to Mr. Townsend's, the doctor's son-in-law, where he found him. "My dear nephew, how glad I am to see you," cried the old man, throwing his arms around him. "I rejoice over you, and love you as my own son. Hold fast whereunto you have attained; let none take your crown."

"Very good counsel that, doctor," said Mr. Townsend. "The crown, I fear, is already in danger, for the report is, that your nephew is much attached to Miss Clara Sydenham, and I am sure she has no more thoughts of religion

than a heathen." These words pierced through Charles Leslie like an arrow. He commanded himself, however; the conversation became general, and the day passed off in an interchange of feelings and thoughts which his new views of life, its duties and hopes, always induce.

Night brought deeper reflection and a more rigid examination of himself. "This is a bitter trial, and I feel it through every fibre," he said, communing with himself. "What a face! every emotion of her mind is reflected in it in a moment! What depth of feeling hidden under so much levity! What an understanding! What powers of conversation when she pleases to exert them! And yet, not one single serious thought can I ever discover! Music—the dance—flirtations with a set of fools and coxcombs, is all that engages her. Why then do I suffer myself to think of an object which, though so beautiful, has no relation to that course of life which my principles now force me to follow? And how is such a course of life to be persevered in, were she mine? Mine! What a thought! I see no prospect of any conformity to my views, and it is distraction—madness—to indulge any hope of it. My uncle's words and Mr. Townsend's remarks ring in my ears. I must stop."

But the struggle, so far from being over, was but just begun. Youth may have its likings, its attachments, but the man who once, after twenty-three years of age, finds his affections engaged, very rarely, indeed, loses entirely the impressions he has felt. The world may demand his efforts, —ambition may solicit his attention—other female loveliness may cross his path, but the first love has left its stamp,

which nothing can utterly efface. The needle may vibrate if it be shaken, but soon again settles at the cardinal point. So Charles Leslie found it. "But am I not judging her harshly?" he said. "How do I know she cannot see,—that my road is safer and pleasanter than hers? Is it not possible I can convince her that religious principles give the strongest securities for her happiness? That she will be safer, in trusting to them than to those which the fashionable world may adopt? Anyhow, it is but fair to try before I give her up, and I will take the first opportunity I can to explain myself fully as to the change in my own views and course of life."

He determined to return the next day to Mr. Sydenham's, but with a consciousness about him that his frequent visits might be noticed, instead of taking the direct route, he determined to take one more circuitous and less exposed to observation. As he turned the corner of the street, he saw Clara, with several young ladies, standing near the paling, in conversation with a lady in her garden, and he immediately joined them. "I am on my way to your father's, Miss Clara," said he; "my leave of absence will soon be out, when I must return to Washington, and I have had as yet but little conversation with your mother, and little with yourself to your satisfaction, if I may judge from your language to me. Will you give me the pleasure of your company home?"

"Yes, if it will be any pleasure to you."

"Is it possible you can doubt that?"

"I know not how I can do otherwise," she replied. "You

are always finding fault with me. You speak harshly, and condemn me unjustly."

"Look at me, Clara," said Charles. She cast her dark, hazel eyes upon him, but it was for a moment only. They fell beneath the ardent gaze which she saw riveted upon her, and which so truly told the emotions which were struggling for utterance. They had now reached Mr. Sydenham's, and were standing in the doorway.

"You little know me, my sweet friend," said Charles, "or care nothing for feelings which, when aroused, I manage with little judgment, I must admit."

"Very strange feelings they must be, Mr. Leslie," she replied, "which prompt you to speak so harshly, and judge so unkindly."

"It is painful to me," said Charles, "to hear you say this, though from appearances you may have cause. I know not how to defend myself from the charge, but in explaining the reasons of my own conduct, and the extent of my own feelings. May I do this, and will you listen to me with candor? It is very possible that you will not admit my justification to be sufficient, but your generosity, I trust, will at least receive it as an extenuation of my offence."

Clara gave no answer, but had turned her face aside; and thus they stood, the scales hanging upon the weight of an atom. It was against them. Mr. Sydenham came up at the moment, and commencing a conversation with Charles, they all entered the parlor.

CHAPTER II.

"I AM glad to see you, Charles," said Mrs. Sydenham, accosting him in her usual familiar and affectionate manner, after Mr. Sydenham had discussed politics and retired. "How long will you be with us?"

"A day or two more only, madam," was the reply. "My leave of absence is nearly out, and I have but little time to make the arrangements which are required for my mother under her late bereavement."

"I am pleased to learn," said Mrs. Sydenham, "that your attention is so directed. But what is this your uncle has told me? Is it true that you have taken a religious turn? People usually attach the idea of gloomy spirits to religion, but I see nothing of that about you, as far as I can judge; on the contrary, you appear as cheerful as is proper, though not so gay as I have seen you formerly."

"The nature of Christianity, my dear madam," replied Charles, "is often greatly mistaken. It makes none who know its power, gloomy; on the contrary, it gives new enjoyments in giving new and more glorious objects of pursuit."

"But you have been absent from us but little more than a year," said Mrs. Sydenham, "and how is it that so great a change has passed upon you in so short a time?"

"It will give me pleasure, madam," said Charles Leslie, "to answer you,—indeed, since my return, I have wished it. In doing so, I will tell you how this change was induced; the principles of conduct it inculcates, and the foundation upon which they are laid.

"The first step I made was reflection; in the language of the Scriptures, consideration. Some circumstances with which it is not necessary to trouble you, forced this upon me. I thought of life, its pleasures, its duties, their opposition to each other, of which my own thoughts gave me incessant admonitions. Two adverse and conflicting principles, seemed to wage within me a war which could end only in the destruction of one or the other. To harmonize them, even in the slightest degree, was, from their very nature, impossible. I then considered the final destiny of man. Here the doctrines of Christianity came into view. They everywhere proclaimed the apostasy of man—his alienation of heart from the Supreme Good—his violation of the holy law of his Creator and Sovereign—the promise of pardon to every returning and repentant prodigal, through the merits of the Saviour—and to such they held forth a thousand promises of indescribable blessedness; while to the obstinately rebellious, they denounced the just judgment of their incensed Creator. But Christianity was violently attacked. The Bible was refused as 'a guide and as a lamp to our feet;' and all that Voltaire, Hume, Gibbon, and a host of others, had written, with all Paine's works, were arrayed anew against it. But I knew also, that Milton, Newton, Pascal, Boyle, and others not less celebrated, had supported its authenticity. I could not

then give up the Bible. But all these conflicting opinions of great men had little to do with the consciousness I carried within me, 'Of Sin, Righteousness, and a Judgment to come.' The light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, was now shining upon me, and I determined to make some zealous efforts to obtain the favor of that Great Being who has called himself our Father, and thus secure hope beyond the grave. I began to pray, in sincerity indeed, but in much ignorance; and the efforts, imperfect as they were, were attended with a degree of peace I had never known before. Even my besetting sin seemed vanquished. But I soon found my mistake. It returned, I was again slain by my enemy, and I could with the great Apostle to the Gentiles cry out in bitterness of soul, 'Who shall deliver me from this body of death!' I had not yet learned to pray through the merits of the Redeemer. This was my state when I went to Washington.

"I had there, of course, but few acquaintances, but much time I could call my own, when released from the usual routine of duties in the public employment. The consequence was, my mind was thrown back upon itself, with a vast increase of uneasiness as it related to my eternal destiny. I could take no pleasure in the amusements in which I was once accustomed to engage with so much life: even nature itself seemed covered over with gloom. The clouds became blacker and heavier. Even the night brought no relief; for I was so tormented in dreams, I have prayed bitterly, that I might sleep one night in peace. Truly, I drank 'the wormwood and the gall.' At length I determined to seek a place of worship. Still it was no better

with me ; in fact, worse. The Gospel proclaimed all to be sinners in the sight of God, and I felt the truth of it. A condemnation was upon me, from which none but the Great Judge himself could absolve me. But would He ? This was now the question, and a most awful one it was. I had nothing to offer as an excuse, much less in satisfaction to justice for the violated law imperatively demanding the punishment of the guilty offender. Language is utterly inadequate to describe this terrific state, by which the sinner is led to see his need of Christ. I now saw this need ; and I besought the Almighty to grant to me the forgiveness of sins, when, as I thus prayed, it flashed through my mind like lightning, that I mentally reserved some objects, the enjoyment of which I considered as indispensable to my happiness. Here then I had reached that important point in the life of man upon which his eternal destiny depends. I was plainly, intelligibly, imperatively called upon to exercise that moral agency of choice between the Supreme Good and Giver of all happiness, on the one side, and the world with all it could give, on the other. ‘My son, give me thy heart,’ was the Divine command, and I knew and felt with complete conviction, that a part only would not be accepted. The struggle was most fearful, never to be forgotten, probably not even through the ages of eternity : angels and devils may have witnessed it. At length, I yielded. I gave up all for Christ, so that I might know him as the Saviour and the power of his resurrection.

“In this state I was, a few nights afterwards, in a place where the Gospel was proclaimed. An old man of stammering speech, without education, and who was constantly

shocking my college ears with his bad grammer, was speaking of Faith in Christ. 'It is the substance of things hoped for,' he exclaimed,—'it is the evidence of things not seen. It is that which unites the soul of man to its Great Creator and Saviour. Whosoever believeth in Him is passed from death unto life, from condemnation into favor; for, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' As he spoke, I believed; my fears were all gone, and a calm came over my spirit, while the passions that heretofore had dominion over me, were now prostrate under my feet, and I knew where my help was.

"But this was little to what I was soon to know. I had met, to worship, with some old, simple-minded Christians, when our Lord came in amongst us, in the spirit, and in the glory of his power, manifesting himself to his disciples, as he told them he would, and in a manner as sensible to the soul as any object in nature can be to the natural senses. I was filled with a peace passing all human comprehension:—dissolved in tears, or giving vent to my joy in exclamations of wonder, love, and gratitude. 'This, then,' I exclaimed, 'is christianity; and oh, how adapted to human necessity and misery! This then is the Saviour who died for us, and rose again, and now liveth to make intercession for us! I know He liveth, and is able to save unto the uttermost, all the ends of the earth that come unto him.'

"This, I am well aware, madam," Charles Leslie continued, "is called fanaticism by the wisdom of this world, but the Scriptures declare that 'the wisdom of this world is

foolishness with God.' And what can be considered more consistent with reason, than this manifestation of our Lord, according to his own sacred promise. We believe that he died for our sins, rose from the grave, and ascended to heaven, where he is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. We believe in his divinity, and it would be foolish, as it would be wicked, to deny his power, and willingness to give to his repentant creatures, the evidence of his goodness. I have heard much and read much of what are called the evidences of Christianity, and though I would not disparage any effort of man to defend even any of its outworks, still, I can but pity those who rest their hopes of heaven upon such faith as comes from external evidence only. For, what is all this book knowledge to ninety-nine men out of one hundred? How few there are who can obtain the volumes where all this knowledge is deposited. How few can read the languages in which they are written. But the language of our Lord is heard and felt by every human heart; and the conviction of sin, because they believe not in him, is so impressed and re-impressed, that no sophistry can escape from it, and nothing but long-continued perseverance in evil, can efface it.

"Again, in prayer we make our requests to God as our Father; but if we have no answer, what the better are we? Are we not in the same position as the apostate Jews when they worshipped the false deities of the Pagan nations around them? Christianity has, indeed, done little for the world. The Saviour, indeed, has died in vain, if there is still no communion opened between our great and

good Creator and his returning prodigal, and no witness from Himself that the reconciliation is complete.

"I have thus, my dear madam, explained to you, as succinctly as I have been able, the exercises of mind which led to this great change in my views and course of life ; and I have also stated somewhat to show, that reason and common sense both support this view of christianity as the only one that can be correct. However sects may differ in speculative notions, they must agree here ; for no language can be more precise than that of our Lord, where He declares, that 'We must be born again ;' nor that of the Apostle, speaking by his authority, that 'Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature,'—nor more precise as to the evidence of our acceptance—'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit.'

"The principles thus brought into operation upon human conduct, are love to God, and love to man. Upon those two hang all the law and the prophets, and most surely none other can possibly have such influence upon the mind, to secure what of happiness belongs to this fleeting existence, or to insure it in that more glorious existence which is before us.

"The foundation is 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified ; the power of God, and the wisdom of God.' Through Him we have received the atonement ; nor is there any other name given under Heaven whereby we must be saved, or by which we can know the forgiveness of sins upon earth."

Charles Leslie here stopped. The ladies were evidently

affected, and there was a long silence. At length Mrs. Sydenham spoke.

"I understand you, I think, my young friend, and I am not able to withhold my assent to your views of christianity, much less would I dispute the truth of what you have declared as your own experience. Mine does not go so far. Though I have known trials in life, and some severe, still they have not wrought that deep consideration which you say is the first step towards this great change. Perhaps, indeed, others may be in reserve for me, and I may yet know all you have spoken of."

"Heaven so grant it, madam," replied Charles. "Come that consideration when it may, and come it will,—and come it must, remember, I beseech you, what I now tell you,—you may know the forgiveness of sins upon earth."

These words sank deep into one heart. Amidst scenes of future trial and distress they were remembered, and believed to be truth spoken by one in whom the listener confided. Often did they recur to her memory, and serve for a support when the hour of temptation and trial had come upon her also. How often it is, that "bread cast upon the waters is found after many days."

After a few moments more of silence, Mrs. Sydenham said, "You know, I suppose, Charles, that Mr. Sydenham is elected to a seat in Congress at the approaching session in December. I have given my consent that the girls shall pass the winter at Washington. Pray see them now and then, and take care," she added, with a smile, "that they do not run into extravagancies of any kind."

Charles Leslie's face flushed up to his forehead, but he

soon recovered himself. "I am honored, madam," he replied, "by the commission you have given to me, though I must confess I have little hope that I shall be of any use in the way you speak of. Washington, during the session of Congress, is gay and dissipated to an excess. All the fashion, beauty, and much of the wealth and intellect of our country are concentrated there. Amusement of every kind is the law, and, it is said, worse than amusement with many. The young ladies will be attended by crowds of admirers, flatterers, suitors; and, I fear, that in one month I may call, and be dismissed by the servant, with a message that they cannot be seen."

"Mr. Leslie! Mr. Leslie!" said Clara, with a reproachful look.

"Don't go," said the fine old lady. "Put down your hat, and dine with us: it is near our hour."

"Not to-day, madam; pray excuse me: I have an engagement."

The evening of the day on which this long conversation took place, was, with Clara, one of more reflection than was usual with her. She was now satisfied that Charles Leslie felt for her a deeper attachment than she had thought of, and was not displeased to find it so. The high respect in which she held his character, had given him some interest with her for some time past, and the conversation at the door, which was interrupted by her father, in showing his feelings for her more fully, had increased hers for him. But an insurmountable obstacle to their union was presented by his religious opinions. "He is no hypocrite, I am sure," she said, "nor do I see how his views of Chris-

tianity can be disputed ; and his words, giving an account of his experience and happiness, go through me like swords. I never, never shall forget the last words he spoke to my mother. I cannot help respecting him, and even like him better than I did, though he finds fault with me. But go to Washington I must. I am young, and have time enough to grow serious. Perhaps, too, I may see some one there I shall like better. Go to Washington I will." Thus thought and thus determined the woman of the world, in opposition to her judgment, and even, in some measure, to her feelings.

Charles Leslie, on his part, was more agitated than Clara. His fears, as to what might be the result of the visit to Washington, were many, and he dreaded the effect that might be made. That Clara would be admired, he considered as a matter of course ; very probably, too, she might be addressed by some high dignitary of the government, or some member of Congress. Or if this should not happen, he feared that her principles and manners might suffer under the incessant dissipation in which she would be involved. She was young, full of spirits, unsuspicious of evil in others ; might give her confidence rashly, and thus be easily led into associations which she might have too much cause to regret afterwards.

His thoughts then took another direction. "I have read," said he, "in that book which is given by infinite wisdom, that the Christian's life is one of unceasing warfare ; and, truly, mine has commenced very early. The Philistines are upon me already. But I can cast this and every other interest I have in life, upon Him who hath said, 'He

careth for me.' If it be best, He can in his own time and way prepare this dear object of my affection, to unite her fate with mine. But never will I travel through life with a mere woman of the world ; and if, in the waywardness of my nature, I should ever purpose otherwise, Heaven now hear and grant that its gracious providences may interpose and prevent me." So saying, he threw himself on his knees ; and soon the young Christian rose strong to do battle with the adversary.

Two days afterwards he set off for Washington.

CHAPTER III.

THE struggle in which all the colonies had been engaged together against the power of Great Britain, had served to bind closer the bands of brotherhood, in which oppression had first united them; and when our glorious Independence was gained, and peace came, it found our fathers prepared to form our present confederacy upon the great principle of mutual concession for the good of the whole. The form of government under which we now live was, in reality, the collective wisdom and patriotism of our noble country. The men who sat in convention have, perhaps, never been equalled by any deliberative assembly that ever met to consult upon the great objects of government. Divine Providence, too, it may be confidently said, and for its own gracious purposes, aided the efforts of the convention in the formation of our beautiful system, and, to crown its blessings, gave us the Father of his Country to set the machine in motion. His administration of eight years, the most arduous and trying period of a new government, served to give a well-grounded hope that the constitution would as fully meet the expectations of its friends as it would prove to be unfounded, the fears of its enemies. But in its progress it developed, likewise, the existence of two parties, of views adverse and

unharmonizing, and which, scarcely to this day, have disappeared from our political conflicts. The acknowledged purity of character, firmness, and sound judgment of the President, served well, however, to control, during his administration, every movement that might have endangered our existence as a confederated republic; and the New world already bid fair to show to the Old, that man needed not kings, priests, and nobles to rule him, but was sufficient with the powers, with which he was endowed by his Maker, to legislate for his own government, by choosing his own law-makers.

But the succeeding administration of Mr. Adams was met by a more spirited resistance than could be raised against that of the great father of his country. Though of an elevated standing, as an advocate of every measure adopted by the old Congress to obtain and secure our independence, his unbounded admiration of the British form of government, and of its administration, subjected him to the charge of a greater leaning towards a monarchy than was fitting in the chief magistrate of a republic. The party opposed to him was a party upon principle; and, after a violent contest, succeeded in defeating his re-election to the presidency. When he left the chair in March, 1801, Washington had become the seat of the General Government.

At the session of Congress which followed the Installation of Mr. Jefferson into the office of President—the winter of 1801–2—Washington presented a brilliant assemblage of talent. Mr. Madison, at the head of the Department of State, sustained its duties with an energy and capacity

which have never since been surpassed ; while his deportment in social life threw around his character additional brilliancy to its lustre as a statesman. Mr. Gallatin administered the financial affairs of the country with a degree of integrity and science, with which even the vigilance of the opposition was compelled to be satisfied. Mr. Smith, at the head of the Naval Department, with the manners of the most perfect gentleman, exerted all his efforts to bring into that branch of the public service, or to retain in it, (not always an easy matter,) men of education, and skill in their profession ; to whom the United States were subsequently indebted for the victories at sea which have added so much to their glory. Little is now known of the difficulties under which, in the then state of the navy, he constantly labored ; nor have his efforts been appreciated as they ought. General Dearborne conducted the War Department, with indifferent ability, but sufficient under the existing circumstances of an army of four thousand men.

Mr. Jefferson's measures were supported in Congress by men of distinguished abilities, and opposed by others in no way their inferiors. Our government, at that time, had been fourteen years only in operation, and the question, even of its continuance, was still problematical with some, who, at the formation of the Constitution, considered it as defective in not having an executive for a long term, and as they therefore thought, a stronger government. They had no conception of a moral power. Everything with then was to move forward under the influence of the sword and musket. But the struggle between the two great parties into which the people of the United States were then divided,

and which, in fact, was a contest of principles, (not for places of profit, as at present,) had resulted in the defeat of the partisans of a strong government, who indignantly and angrily saw the doctrine of the Sovereignty of the People brought into operation by a President as well disposed, as able, to give it practical effect. Instead of considering it necessary to have a body of legislators to save the people from themselves, as their worst enemies,—as was boldly said by a senator from New York,—Mr. Jefferson considered it more necessary, as history proved, the people should take care that their servants did not become their masters. This cool-headed and deep statesman, detesting monarchy, the effects of which he had witnessed in Europe; devoted to republican institutions, through which only he knew that liberty could flourish, exerted all his powers to lay strong and deep foundations for posterity. He did so; and now, that forty years have passed away, his views of the constitution are considered as land-marks for our legislation; and no man, at this day, can aspire to a seat in Congress, whose opinion, as to the sovereignty of the people, is even questionable. Richelieu has been accounted a great minister, because he long preserved his ascendancy over a weak and bigoted king; but Jefferson preserved his over men of vast intellect, from their confidence in his talents, integrity, and devotion to his country.

At this period of our history, not only were the principles recognized in the constitution to be developed in practice, but its power to secure the great objects for which it was framed, was to be evinced. Our prosperity, it is true, had advanced rapidly, but causes of complaint against the

two greatest nations of Europe, were daily accumulating, threatening to test, at no distant day, how far our government would be efficient for war. But the philosophy of the President led him to endeavor to obtain justice from the belligerents, by appeals to their interests, rather than by arms. Embargoes and non-intercourse laws were resorted to, and Congress, under his guidance, submitted to inflict vast injury upon ourselves, in the hope that we should thereby inflict greater upon them. But as these measures did not eventually save us from war, Mr. Jefferson's policy in our foreign relations, it has been long seen, is marked with a weakness as disgraceful to us, as that of Walpole, in his dispute with the Spaniards, was to Great Britain. We gained nothing by our restrictive measures, but invited by our cowardice additional insults and injuries. But the President persisted in his course to the end of his administration; and finally, left it to his successor to make war, as a measure demanded as much by our interest as by our honor. Great Britain, by her humiliating defeats on the ocean, then paid dearly for the past, and it may be, that she will yet pay more so. In half a century "The ball of empire will have rolled to the West."

But at the period now referred to, it probably did not enter into the head of a single statesman amongst us, what immense developments of our resources one generation only would produce. Neither steamboats nor railroads had been thought of: there was not even a turnpike from Philadelphia to Trenton. Manufactures, we had none. The military spirit had expired with the war of Independence which had aroused it; and the old officers of that period

who were yet on the roll of the army, were resting content with the laurels they had gathered in the glorious strife of their youth, rather than ambitious of seeking new ones in new fields. Our young navy, it is true, was even then giving fair promise in the Mediterranean of what it has since achieved upon the ocean, but futurity for our country was still covered over with doubts and fears. Who that remembers that time, and the events that were occurring daily, and affecting every portion of the globe, but must recur to it with gratitude, when he now sees our present high standing amongst the nations of the earth, the stability of our institutions, and our increasing prosperity.

The United States were a vast field, for which our distinguished men rushed to contest. The administration of the government of the new Republic of the West, was a brilliant object of pursuit; and though defeated in keeping possession of it, the Federal party did not despair of recovering it. Their opposition was inveterate, and sustained by vast powers. Gouverneur Morris, of New York, was a host of himself. This celebrated man, who had served in the Congress of the old federation, had been ambassador to France, in the first period of her revolutionary career, and had returned home, imbued, it was thought, with monarchical principles. Certain it is, he as heartily affected the cause of the Bourbons, as he detested the revolutionary party which, at this time, conducted the French government, under the Consulate of Bonaparte. His personal-appearance, though he had lost a leg, was superb. Dressed in high style, his hair powdered, according to the fashion of the olden-times; his large, but well-proportioned

form; his broad forehead, and eagle face; his erect bearing when he rose to speak in the Senate, he presented to the observer an object for reflection as well as of admiration. Nor was he less distinguished in debate. With language at command, and embellished by trope and figure; with illustrations drawn from books and intercourse with men; with a voice sonorous and well-modulated; with action as graceful as appropriate; he commanded deep attention. Still, he made no commensurate impression. His flight was too discursive; his premises not laid down with sufficient precision, nor his deductions fully logical; leaving him open to the attacks of his keen and discriminating opponent.

This was Mr. Breckenridge of Kentucky. As a lawyer, he was, beyond dispute, superior to Mr. Morris. In discernment of the main point at issue, in laying it in the clearest light before his hearers, in pressing it with all its force upon the judgment, disregarding what might be considered as merely collateral; in all this he could hardly be excelled at the bar, or in the Senate. He spoke easily and well, but there was little of ornament in his style; and his form, though tall and well-proportioned, bore no comparison with the magnificent appearance of his rival. It was the backwoodsman, and the courtier of Versailles.

These two great men led the vanguards of the contending parties in the Senate. There were others, it is true, well known in our history, who brought to their assistance a vast fund of legal and political knowledge, but these two stood pre-eminent. The crowded lobbies and galleries bore constant evidence of the interest taken by the public,

whenever it was known that either of them was to speak.

In the other House, Mr. Bayard was considered as the leader of the opposition. He had shown incontestable evidence of his patriotism in giving up his party spirit, or, it may be, the preference of his judgment, in submitting to the election of Mr. Jefferson by the House of Representatives. At a later period he evinced it again, by supporting his country in her war with Great Britain. His mind was of the highest order, and his eloquence engrossing. The defect was, in his carrying into parliament the practice of the lawyer, and losing sight too often of the main point at issue, in the various shades of difference he presented. Few more real patriots have appeared amongst us since the peace of '83, and few statesmen with powers of mind equal to his.

John Randolph was the leader of the administration party in the House of Representatives. It is difficult to describe this strange man, as eccentric in character as pre-eminent in talents. As to "building up an argument brick by brick," or "stringing together boquets of rhetoric," as he one day expressed himself, he disdained it; and yet his arguments were illustrated from trades, professions, occupations, books; from almost everything on earth, and all as appropriate as beautiful. It was his delight to crush his opponent by a single blow, by showing the falsehood of his facts, or premises, or conclusions, rather than defeat him by a more continued chain of reasoning. It is impossible to conceive, now that a meretricious kind of oratory has usurped the place once occupied by powerful and natural

eloquence ;—now, that county-court lawyers vacate, as soon as they rise, the seats which were once held for hours successively, in listening to the Cicero of the Union,—it is impossible to describe the intense interest with which men listened to John Randolph. His sharp enunciation, every word distinct, clear, and appropriate ; his face, depicting every passion that sprung up in his mind ; his gestures, even the pointing of his long, lean finger, all combined to add to the effect which his language never failed to make. The Congress of the United States has not yet produced his equal as a speaker to a popular assembly.

The chair was filled by Mr. Macon of North Carolina, a gentleman of undoubted purity of character, but with little ability to preserve order in the House. Noise and confusion reigned throughout the hall continually. But as soon as the Committee of the Whole was raised, and Mr. John Cotton Smith, from Connecticut, took the chair, (to which he was usually called by the Speaker,) the noise and confusion ceased, the members took their seats, and the business proceeded with the gravity and decorum which ought ever to characterize the proceedings of a legislative body. No man who had presided in that chair up to that time, surpassed Mr. John Smith in the discharge of its duties : none since have equalled him.

In the progress of Mr. Jefferson's administration, changes, of course, took place in the legislative bodies ; but in the friends of the President, none of any consideration, with the exception of Mr. Randolph, who commenced an opposition which he continued through Mr. Jefferson's, and even carried it into the succeeding administration of Mr.

Madison. But no opposition could arrest the measures which Mr. Jefferson saw fit to pursue. His principles of government, and measures consequent upon them, were constantly supported by majorities which set opposition at defiance; and it is hardly unfair to say, that he transferred the reins of government to his successor in what has been called "The Line of safe Precedent," until the people, in the majesty of their power, set that line aside.

The city itself presented the appearance of desolation. There were then none of those beds of flowers, or gushing fountains, or shrubbery, or shady groves, as we now see, where love (if love could be at Washington) might breathe its hopes and vows to listening beauty; or where the patriot (and there were patriots then at Washington) might wonder, and muse, and anticipate the future greatness and prosperity of his country. On emerging out of the woods upon the open plain, the eye looked over an immense space, the first object in which that drew attention, was the unfinished Capitol. On approaching it, were seen large blocks of unhewn stone—sculpture, some finished, some not; the grounds rough, not even levelled—the shops of the workmen. In the distance, to the west, appeared the President's House, unfinished likewise—stone thickly strown around—workshops scattered about—the grounds not even inclosed—the public offices sunk so low, that it was necessary to descend by a flight of steps to reach the first floor; and close at hand were the kilns where the bricks were burned to erect them:—everything bore evidence of the unfinished state in which the new government had taken possession of the new seat of their empire. Blocks of

buildings, at great distances apart, erected in places which the speculators supposed would be most advantageous for their interests, proved what fantastic ideas were held of the rapid increase of the metropolis. Pennsylvania Avenue was the only thoroughfare, and that was almost impassable in the winter. The boarding-houses were of the poorest description, both as to the table and accommodations; and the votaries of pleasure paid the highest prices for everything. Some weeks elapsed before all were settled for the season; and at the beginning of the year, the parties for matrimonial projects with some, of gambling and intrigue with others, and of amusement for all, commenced. And thus time, during the session, was passed. But by some inexplicable cause then, and it is as inexplicable down to the present day, notwithstanding the assemblage of beauty and fashion thus brought together from our broad Union, such a thing as an engagement for marriage was hardly ever known. The gentlemen were either too much engrossed in politics, or perhaps disgusted at seeing female loveliness brought so profusely into market; or, the ladies had discovered that men at Washington, were neither handsomer, nor better, nor more intelligent than those they had left at home; or, they were so amused that they could not be serious enough to give themselves away; or, their prudent fathers had discovered, that mere official dignity was not sufficient without the more substantial advantage of wealth; or, perhaps of intellect; or, perhaps (in a very few cases) of sound morality, to secure the happiness of their daughters. Be all this as it may, the end of the session, after all the manœuvring brought into operation, found all in the

same position as at the beginning. Marriages, by some fatality or other, could not be brought about; and from that time to this, a fair calculation will not give more than one for every four sessions that have since passed away. Such then was Washington, during the administration of Mr. Jefferson.

Mr. Sydenham arrived at the opening of the session of 1807-8. His daughters followed him two weeks later, under the care of Mrs. Marchmont, the lady of one of the representatives from New York, and a relative of the Sydenhams. She had with her, also, her beautiful daughter Lucy, as sensible as beautiful! How many of those lovely beings have passed away forever. How many recollections still remain of what they were in *auld lang syne*. The present generation may have its beauty, and wit, and accomplishments assembled annually at Washington, but it will hardly equal what was found there at the session of 1807-8.

CHAPTER IV.

HOWEVER strong were the attractions or repulsions which existed between the two great political parties that met annually in Congress, they operated but slightly in forming the societies which were found at the different places where they were then accommodated. Nor, indeed, were those places sufficiently numerous to admit of much choice or preference. The great object was, a place wherein to stow away all whom business or pleasure had assembled there ; and inconveniencies were soon borne or forgotten, in the pleasure which such new and enlivening scenes were sure to produce. Nor, indeed, was the sight without its interest. Men who bore upon their persons the scars of wounds received in every State of our wide Union, and who had never met since the peace of 1783, or known each other but as history had told of their patriotism and bravery, now met to deliberate upon the general welfare of their country. The south intermingling with the north, and the east with the west; the families of the members interchanging the courtesies of life, or forming friendships, all served to bind still closer, the parts of our beautiful system. In the halls of Congress, the two parties watched each other keenly ; but at the boarding-house, the urbanity of the gentleman took place of the spleen of the politician,

and all seemed anxious to make their temporary intercourse pleasant to each other.

The company at Vanderhorn's, on Capitol Hill, where Mr. Sydenham had taken lodgings, was mixed up of the Federal and Democratic parties, in nearly equal numbers. Mr. Sydenham, Mr. Marchmont, with Mr. Longfield from Virginia, comprised that part of the company, the most distinguished for the high-standing of the gentlemen in political life; and two single gentlemen of the House of Representatives, Mr. O'Connor from New York, of Irish descent, and Mr. Hollis, from Virginia, completed the mass as to the gentlemen. Mrs. Marchmont and her daughter, with the two Misses Sydenham, comprised all the ladies making part of the establishment of the members of Congress; but there was another lady also at Vanderhorn's, Mrs. Stanley, from the south, the widow of an officer of the revolutionary army, whom business had a second time brought to Washington. This lady, whom Charles Leslie had known the winter before, drew universal attention by her powers of conversation; though her conduct was not always governed by those strict rules which society has established as indispensable to female propriety. Followed as she was by men of the highest station and intellect, she dictated to her own sex, the fashion for everything; all submitted in some degree or other to a superiority they could not contest, and endeavored then to imitate manners which they saw draw about her so many admirers. Devoted to intrigue from the excitement it produced, still she contrived to make it doubtful, whether she was in search of a second husband, for which her personal appearance offered some

inducement, or, was only securing friends to support her claims upon the government. But while thus engaged, she had full time to make her influence felt upon the young and unsuspecting girls whom she found at Washington; and as ingenuousness no longer formed part of her own character, she seemed anxious to drive it from others, and to bring them down to her own standard of heartlessness, and even of indifference to public opinion.

Charles Leslie frequently heard of the young ladies in the various reports of new arrivals, or those still more various of the sayings and doings of the wit and beauty assembled at Washington. He was not mistaken in his expectations of the admiration they would excite, and his jealousy and his fears were both increased. But he had made up his mind to let things take their course, well-knowing that he could not turn them in the channel he wished; and he determined to show no solicitude that would make him appear other than as an acquaintance of some years standing. He was in no hurry therefore to make even his first visit, and waited two weeks as calmly as he could, before he presented himself. During this time the young ladies had got engaged in the usual routine of fashionable life. Visits to the two halls of Congress, ostensibly to hear the debates,—in reality, to see and be seen, was then, as now, the usual mode of passing away an hour or two in the morning; then calls upon their acquaintances, attended by an admirer: in the evening, balls and parties occupied their time still more agreeably. It was one night after their return home from one of these balls,

that the Misses Sydenham and Miss Marchmont found themselves sitting in their room, before a large fire.

"What in this world, Agnes," said Clara, "is become of my little admirer, Charles Leslie, that he keeps himself at such a distance? I will bet a pair of gloves that he has heard how we are going on, and has given us up as irreclaimable. Or, do you think that he has drowned himself in the Potomac? Any how, I should like to see his long, sober face once more; and if it does not come before me very soon, I shall take care not to know it when it does. Mr. Charles Leslie ought not to forget, that if he has made me afraid to cause the cutting off the skirts of another coat, I may be bold enough still to cut a gentleman's feelings."

"I must first ask you, sister," said Agnes, "an explanation of your phrase, 'little admirer.' Charles Leslie is six feet high; and as straight as an arrow. Why do you call 'your little admirer?'"

"Why, Agnes, you know what a selector of words he is, and I have been learning from him. By 'little admirer,' I mean, he admires me a little. Now answer my questions if you can. It will be a serious matter if I lose him after all."

"I have no doubt it will," said Agnes, "but to your questions: I do not know what he has heard of us, or whether he considers us as irreclaimable or not. As to his having drowned himself in the Potomac for you, or any one, or anything, wipe your eyes: there is no danger of that. As to your cutting his feelings, I do not doubt your ability to do that, though I suspect, if you attempt it, he will not spare your own in return."

"Who is this Mr. Leslie, girls," said Lucy Marchmont. "He seems to be an object of some interest to both of you."

"I believe, Lucy," said Agnes, "that sister can give you the best account of him."

"I think so, too, Lucy," replied Clara. "Now listen: Firstly, he is an acquaintance of five or six years standing,—that is, since he left college. Secondly, he is tall, straight as an arrow, and slender as a lath. He is not so handsome that any lady would die for love of him, nor so ugly that any lady need refuse him on that account only. Then thirdly, he is sober, religious, and of course, steady. He is very agreeable when it pleaseth him so to be, and most monstrously disagreeable when it pleaseth him to take that turn. Fourthly, he is an admirer of mine; but I give you to know, he says that this word comes from a Latin word signifying 'to wonder at,' and as a gentleman may wonder at a lady's giddiness or extravagancies of various kinds, as well as at her beauty, or mind, or manners, or principles, he has contrived, by a single word, to leave me in doubt for what it is I am indebted for his admiration. Lastly, when he makes love to me, he does it by quarrelling with me."

"I have a great curiosity," said Lucy, "to see the original of this strange picture you have drawn. There are some features in it, too, which I like so well, that I have a notion of trying for Mr. Leslie myself."

"I forbid the bans, Lucy," replied Clara. "The bare mention of it has given me an ague."

"Well, I will not come between you in this affair—of

what to call it, I am sure I know not. I will only tell him of your winning money at cards the other night."

"I shall positively deny it, Lucy," said Clara, "and take my chance for his believing you or me."

Thus those lively, ingenuous young beings amused themselves for an hour. Could they, indeed, have looked into the futurity of a few years only, what would they have seen? With two, hopes blooming and withering in an hour, and death claiming all this loveliness as his prey, and the grave closing upon it: the third, essaying a long, and weary, and sad pilgrimage of years. And such is this world, where disappointment is lurking on the side of every road that love, or ambition, or avarice, or pride may travel, and the cold, dark grave the end of all! Dark, indeed, to those who have never looked beyond it, but glorious to those who have known that the Redeemer is the resurrection and the life.

Charles Leslie, in the course of the following week, was in the gallery of the House of Representatives, and seeing that Clara and Lucy were in the seats appropriated for the ladies, he determined to watch their departure, and attend them home. They soon went off. It took Charles some time before he could extricate himself from the crowd in which he was wedged, in the small galleries of the then place of sitting of the Representatives, and he was not able to join them before they had reached Vanderhorn's, where he found them in the drawing-room, with Agnes and Mrs. Stanley. Agnes ran up to him with all the artlessness of youth. Clara advanced more slowly, and with dignity and ease, and introduced him to Lucy and Mrs. Stanley.

"Mr. Leslie is an acquaintance of mine of a year's standing, Miss Sydenham," said Mrs. Stanley, approaching Charles Leslie, with her hand extended to him. "We have had already many keen encounters of the wits, and may yet have others." She then made many inquiries about old acquaintances at the seven buildings, and asked him what additions had been made to their old company at the present session.

"We remain, madam," he replied, "as when you last left us, with the exception of Captain Jackson of the army, who came last week."

"Captain Jackson?" she replied, "my late husband's nephew! Look to your hearts, young ladies; he belongs to the artillery, and if he lays siege to you, you will hardly be able to hold out against his fine military appearance and strategy of various kinds, in which he is so skilful. Are you not of my opinion, Mr. Leslie?"

"I am not able to answer for the ladies, madam," replied Charles; "the captain's appearance is certainly very fine; but perhaps some other requisites might be expected before they capitulated, and what those should be they themselves only have the right to judge."

"But do you not think he would be a formidable rival?" inquired Mrs. Stanley.

"That, madam, would depend upon the character of the lady, whose favor he might endeavor to secure."

"You evade me with your usual address, Mr. Leslie," said Mrs. Stanley. "What is it, do you think, the ladies most particularly affect in gentlemen who may pay them attentions?"

"Sound principles, and high standing amongst men, madam," was the reply."

"You pay us a compliment in this," said Mrs. Stanley; "but the captain would well come under your rule, and, I think, would secure an interest in any lady's heart he might attempt."

"I have no disposition to dispute what you say, madam," replied Charles.

"But I have," said Lucy.

"And I," added Clara, "have no intention it shall be considered that I am to be made a captive so easily as Mrs. Stanley contemplates."

"We shall see," said the lady, rising, and leaving the room upon a summons by her servant.

Charles Leslie then entered into conversation with the young ladies, and after making many inquiries after old acquaintances, particularly Mrs. Sydenham, to whom he was much attached, "I have often heard of you since your arrival at Washington," said he; "now tell me what you think of it. Have you found the Garden of Eden?"

"As to externals, Mr. Leslie," said Clara, "certainly not: as to other matters, yes."

"Then the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," said Charles, "is here anyhow, and you have already tasted the forbidden fruit."

"We have tried several," she replied, "and have found none unpalatable."

"They may do the more injury on that very account," said Charles.

"To ourselves, do you mean, Charles?" inquired Agnes.

"To others, as well as to yourselves."

"If to ourselves, Mr. Leslie," said Lucy, "we must bear it as well as we can: if to others, as we do not intend injury, we ought to be excused."

"Not always, I fear, Miss Marchmont," Charles replied. "Carelessness may come within your rule of no intention to do injury, and yet may sometimes produce as much as malevolence itself."

"Injury to ourselves, then, is the question," said Clara. "How are we to do ourselves any injury in this gay place, where there are so many things to be amused at, and so many people to be amused with?"

"What is the object of amusement?" inquired Charles.

"To pass our time agreeably, to be sure," replied Clara.

"Would it not be better to employ your time usefully?"

"Staid, married women may do that," said Clara: "young ladies have no occasion."

"I wish you would think further and more seriously," replied Charles. "Young, as well as old ladies have their duties, and it is the duty of the young to establish such principles as will secure their happiness. But if amusement be the sole object pursued, there will be no time for this, and, what is worse, there will soon be no disposition. Would not this be to do yourself great injury?"

"I will tell you, Mr. Leslie," said Lucy, "what Clara has been doing, and you may then call it what you please. She won money at cards from gentlemen; but to do her justice, I must add, she was so ashamed of it, that she rose from the table suddenly, ran out of the room, and left it to Mr. Sydenham to scrape it all up. Then, she is a great

admirer of the new German dance lately introduced amongst us, though as yet she has not danced it herself."

"Not guilty as to the winning money," said Clara; "I confess to the other."

"And I am sorry it is necessary you should," replied Charles. "I have heard of the dance which Miss Marchmont speaks of, and am astonished that it should ever have got footing amongst us. From the accounts I have had of it from some officers with whom I am acquainted, it is"—

"What?" said Agnes.

"I cannot say what," replied Charles, "but I will say this much,—if you knew how gentlemen speak of it, you would never dance it."

Charles then turning to Clara, inquired of her, if Mrs. Stanley was an intimate acquaintance of hers.

"I have that pleasure, Mr. Leslie," she replied. "Perhaps I should have said the honor."

"I am very sorry to hear you call it a pleasure, and I deny it to be any honor."

"How so? What do you mean?"

"I mean just what I say," replied Charles. "You have heard, I suppose, how freely she is spoken of, and her disregard of it all. Can it be a pleasure to you, and can you think it to be an honor, to have an intimacy with a lady who pays no respect to the proprieties of life,—perhaps, indeed, to the safeguards of character?"

"I have heard of the reports which I suppose you allude to," said Clara, "but I do not believe them, though appearances, I allow, are against her."

"You know where it is," said Charles, "that I find the

only safe principles for human conduct. 'Avoid all appearance of evil,' is a rule which has the stamp of divinity upon it, and believe when I tell you, that whoever is not willing to avoid the appearance of evil, will soon be prepared to admit its reality."

The earnestness with which Charles Leslie spoke had its effect. Clara's quick feelings subjected her to deep impressions whenever fair and honest appeals were made to her understanding. Her speaking face told in a moment that reflection was busy with her. Agnes now took up the defence.

"You are censorious, Charles," said she. "Mrs. Stanley chooses to travel her own road, and, if you do not like it, keep away, and do not disturb her or others who may choose to travel it with her."

"But I will disturb others," he replied, "if I see others, in whose welfare I am interested, in such company. Remember the French adage, Agnes, '*c'est ne que le premier pas qui coute*,' or the remark of your favorite Boileau, '*un chute toujours attire un autre chute*.'"

"I do not admit," said Agnes, "the application of either to the present subject."

"It might, perhaps, be unreasonable," Charles replied, "to expect you should. You are too young and inexperienced in life for that, but youth and inexperience only increase the dangers which arise from improper associations. The road of life is thickly set with dangers, and if we will obstinately pursue it as our first and sole object, we shall certainly find disappointment. Who can tell what changes may pass upon you all within a few years?"

Changes they were indeed !

At this moment the door opened, and gave admittance to two or three young men, one of them a son of old Col. Darby of the army of the Revolution. They came to inquire for the health of the ladies after the last night's ball. Charles now became a listener, but soon found that he might listen during the whole morning to very little purpose. The conversation consisted of the usual vapid talk of idlers with young ladies, set off with what wit they were able to show, and a great deal of gallantry. Mr. Darby, by his close seat to Clara, and his earnest and low tone of voice, seemed endeavoring to ingratiate himself into her favor. He had at last advanced so far as to get possession of her reticule, and appeared to be admiring its fabric of white satin, and still more, the birds which were beautifully painted upon it. At this moment Charles Leslie, who had all this time preserved a dead silence, drew the attention of the whole company upon himself, by asking Clara to give him the painting for his watch-case. "Hand me your watch," she replied, "that I may cut it to its proper size." Without being well able to account to himself for the sudden impulse which had dictated his request, Charles now became embarrassed at the readiness with which it was granted, not divining, however, how the scene was to end. A few moments sufficed to show. The painting was instantly cut out and placed in the watch, and the reticule spoiled. Coloring, and then bowing to the fair giver, Charles resumed his seat, and the company soon afterwards took leave. How long that gift was kept, and cherished, and gazed upon ! How strong and enduring the impres-

sion which the first appearance of preference makes upon the young heart ! Go the world as it may, in after days it still delights to dwell on scenes when it loved first and loved entirely.

"I like your admirer prodigiously, Clara," said Lucy Marchmont, "and as you say you can do as you please with your captives, suppose you deliver him over to me."

"He is an obstinate exception to my practice in such cases," replied Clara ; "nor have I fully made up my mind yet to part with him. He always sets me to thinking seriously when he is with me, and, indeed, sometimes when he is absent ; but after all it comes to nothing."

Charles was wending his way home. "What does all this mean ?" thought he. "She is prompt enough to affront any one she does not like, and to make any one keep such distance as she may see fit, and yet she spoils her reticule at my first asking for the painting upon it." "Is not that your vanity ?" whispered something within him. "How do you know that she would not have done the same thing, had Mr. Darby requested it ?" But Charles Leslie had no vanity. It was no difficult matter, therefore, to settle the question in his own mind, that no preference had drawn the painting from her. Still, the whole scene, and her look, and manners, and attractions at the moment, made sad work within him.

Two days afterwards, Charles Leslie had gone to Vanderhorn's to see Mr. Sydenham on some public business, and had been conversing for a few moments only with the ladies, when the servant ushered in Capt. Jackson on a visit to Mrs. Stanley. Charles was obliged by the laws of po-

liteness to introduce him. Mrs. Stanley soon came in, and Mr. Sydenham sending for Charles to his room, he took his leave.

There exists generally amongst military men, distinguished in their profession, an ease and dignity of manners which is rarely found, in an equal degree, with men in the walks of civil life. To consciousness of the trust confided by their country to their patriotism and ability as its defenders, the habit of command imparts also a self-possession, which puts the officer at ease with others, and makes others easy with him. He carries with him into the society of the world with which he may be called occasionally to mingle, the courtesies of the mess-table of his regiment, and there is hardly to be found more elegant manners thus formed, than we often see amongst officers of rank. But as in most things there are exceptions, so there are in this. One step beyond self-possession becomes boldness, and one beyond the proper effort to please others, is very apt to evince a superiority which would produce an opposite effect. The captain, unfortunately, was not able to draw this line distinctly. Relying too much upon his fine military appearance, his manners, instead of being easy, were forward and presuming, while his bold stare at the female loveliness before him, disgusted the sensitiveness which met it. Some few minutes' conversation and manœuvring on his part, convinced Clara and Lucy, that Mrs. Stanley's prediction as to a siege, or at least an attack, was likely to be verified.

After some commonplace inquiries by Mrs. Stanley of the captain, in relation to his family,—

“And what, George, has brought you to the city of con-

fusion," said she, "where so many languages are spoken, and so little of them understood? And what fair one from the south or the north has enlisted you in her service?"

"Public business has brought me here, is my answer," replied the captain, "to your first question. As to the second, I have not yet sufficiently reconnoitred so as to know to whom I may offer service. At present, I am only looking about me." And he fixed his black eyes, first upon Clara, then upon Lucy, as if he were critically comparing them.

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Stanley. "Then I predict it will not be long before I see you engaged,—perhaps defeated."

"An engagement, with military men," replied the captain, "means a battle,—opposition,—and this I have not yet encountered, and have not, of course, met a defeat."

"Perhaps the captain does not think he could meet with one," said Lucy, addressing herself to Mrs. Stanley.

"Perhaps so," replied the captain, briskly drawing up his fine form to its full height, and playing with his sabretash. "Field-officers, it is admitted, are great favorites with the ladies, go where they may; and I do not see why captains, so near them in rank, should not be as much so."

"At Washington, captain?" inquired Clara.

"I do not see, Miss Sydenham," he replied, "why Washington should be an exception."

"Nor do I," said Mrs. Stanley. "We certainly do not find here, the ease of manners and the fine appearance of our officers, amongst members of Congress, or any others that crowd this place through the winter."

Clara and Lucy already perceived the vanity and for-

wardness which formed such prominent features in the captain's character ; and, from their high sense of female dignity, were, in despite of his fine military appearance, already disgusted with his manners. Nor were they less so at Mrs. Stanley, for encouraging him in the expression of sentiments which strongly implied, that no lady could resist his attentions. They interchanged looks which each well understood, and soon afterwards rose and went to their own room. As soon as they had shut the door, they turned and faced each other for a moment, and then both broke out into a loud laugh.

"You have nothing left for it, Lucy," said Clara, "but to surrender at discretion. An epaulette is not to be resisted, even at Washington. Poor girl! how unfortunate, that you should have met the captain so soon, and thus lose all chance for a member of Congress!"

"Look to yourself, Clara," replied her friend. "I am by no means sure that I am to be the object of attack. I admit some œliads, very severe for a beginning; but as I saw that you received as many, I think it quite as likely that you will be summoned to surrender as soon as I shall."

"Then you may rely upon it," said Clara, "if I am, he shall have a lesson in female tactics that shall last him till he is a major-general. It is an insult to our whole sex, as well as to ourselves personally, to use such language in our hearing, and that, too, at a first introduction."

"And did you observe Mrs. Stanley?" said Lucy. "I strongly suspect that Mr. Leslie's opinion of her is just. I

thought at the time that it was harsh, but now I am inclined to think that it was not harsh enough."

"I have known Charles Leslie a long time," replied Clara, "and respect his judgment greatly. He spoke, you may recollect, with much earnestness upon the occasion you refer to, and it has put me upon my guard. If Mrs. Stanley thinks to bring me under her management, she will certainly find herself mistaken."

"Who are these ladies?" inquired the captain, of Mrs. Stanley, as soon as they had retired. "They are certainly very showy in their appearance, and I found it difficult to decide which is the most so."

"They are the daughters of two members of Congress, one of them, Mr. Sydenham, on the administration side, has considerable influence, it is thought: the other, less so."

"Are they rich?" demanded the captain.

"I cannot answer you that question," returned the lady, "as they are not from the south, as we are. Perhaps Leslie, with whom I see you are acquainted, can tell you. But what are you musing upon?"

"It is useless to disguise my affairs from you," said the captain, "and perhaps you will assist to further them. The threatening appearances between the United States and Great Britain have given rise to the probability of a war; and rumor is rife that Congress will authorize the raising of additional regiments. I think my claims to the command of one are not to be disputed; still, it would be prudent to get aid from such quarter as I can. Now, if I draw one of these ladies into an engagement, to be followed

up to marriage if I see fit hereafter, it might secure my object effectually."

"Oh! as to your being able to do this, I have no doubt your appearance and rank, George, will secure your success. All the girls you see here are in the market, and the supply is so great that there is no little competition amongst them who shall get the first offers. I think, too, I can help you with the two you have just seen."

Thus these heartless beings would have trifled with feelings of which they knew nothing themselves, and have made both honor and principle subservient to their own selfish purposes.

Charles Leslie had been compelled by the rules of society to introduce Captain Jackson to the ladies, under the fortuitous circumstances in which he had been placed when the captain called to see Mrs. Stanley. His solicitude as to the result of an acquaintance which he was the unwilling instrument of having formed, increased upon him every step he took up Pennsylvania Avenue, towards his lodgings. As he neared them, he looked at his watch, and found that there were nearly two hours to dinner, when he might expect to meet his rival, as he already considered him. He had then time enough to mark out his own line of cautious behavior,—determined, as well to evince no interest in the inquiries he expected the captain would make of him, as to observe him closely.

"I am your debtor, Mr. Leslie," said the captain, "for the introduction you gave me this morning to Miss Sydenham and Miss Marchmont. You appear to be an old acquaintance."

"Of Miss Sydenham," replied Charles. "My acquaintance with Miss Marchmont is of this session only."

"Are they the daughters of the gentlemen of their names—members of Congress?"

"They are," replied Charles.

"Are these gentlemen rich?"

"Mr. Sydenham," replied Charles, "has a large landed and personal property. Of Mr. Marchmont's wealth, I know nothing: the general opinion is, he is rich. Your inquiries are to the point, captain."

"I am a stranger here," he replied, "and wish to know something of the society I may meet during the winter."

"It is well to throw out scouting parties, captain," said Mr. Lewis, from the head of the table. "An engagement then cannot come on by surprise."

"It is a small matter to me, sir," he replied, "how it comes on, as I think myself able to capture any I may engage."

"But, captain," retorted Mr. Lewis, "Washington is a new field in which you have never yet manœuvred. The élite of the beauty, wealth, and fashion of the Union are here, and it may be prudent to abate somewhat of your confidence."

"'Faint heart never won fair lady,' is the old saying," said the captain, "and my success elsewhere leads me to expect the same here."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Lewis, with a twist of his mouth.

The servant had now cleared off the dessert, and the gentlemen, except Mr. Lewis and Charles, had retired. "Leslie," said Mr. Lewis, lighting his cigar, and puffing

away violently at intervals, "that is a high fellow. He is certainly very handsome, but I have rarely, up to this my thirty-fifth year, met such consummate vanity in a military man. I never saw anything of this in any one officer of the army I am acquainted with."

"Nor I," replied Charles, "and I know many of them well. They are of a high tone of character, with manners easy and unassuming; abrupt, it is true, sometimes,—in a soldier's fashion, but never obtrusive. I greatly admire them,—Captain Decatur particularly. I have seen, too, officers of the army of very dignified deportment, and I think that the captain is hardly a fair sample of that arm of the national force. But what was that you said about your thirty-fifth year? Surely, I have heard you confess to forty-five!"

Lewis burst into a laugh. "You think you have caught me, you young rogue, do you? Now remember I am gone back to thirty-five for this winter, that I may rival the captain in the good graces of the ladies."

"Success to you," said Charles, as he rose from the table.

"Stop, Leslie, stop," said Lewis; but he was gone.

CHAPTER V.

VANDERHORN'S never failed to be resorted to at night, when balls were not given, by visitors to the ladies or to the gentlemen, or to both, that composed the society. Cards for the elderly gentlemen, music from the ladies, and agreeable and interesting conversation from all, gave constant inducement to repeat visits that were found to be so pleasant. Mr. O'Connor, by his hereditary Irish wit and incessant good-humor, became, in a short time, a great favorite with all, especially with the girls; as his own age, more than double theirs, precluded the thought that he could be a serious admirer for any of them. Mr. Hollis was a different character. Notwithstanding that he was about twenty-seven years of age only, he was grave and retired, appeared to be always in deep thought, and, unless excited by conversation, his features were harsh. But when animated, his flow of ideas and choice of expression bespoke him to be no ordinary man, and made him even handsome. It had been but a short time since he commenced making any acquaintance with Clara and Lucy, but had given his attention to Mrs. Marchmont and Agnes. The animation and intelligence of the two young ladies had, however, begun to thaw what appeared to be ice externally, and the fire that was hidden beneath was soon

visible. But it was not yet apparent to an observer, to which the proud son of the Old Dominion had given his preference.

A hack was standing one evening before a fashionable boarding-house on Pennsylvania Avenue, and just as a gentleman came out, closely wrapped up in his cloak, to get into it, another came up on foot, to go into the house. "Where are you going, Leslie?" said Captain Jackson. "You appear to be particularly well dressed this evening."

"To Vanderhorn's, on Capitol Hill."

"That is lucky," said he; "I have just come in to make some preparations for a visit there myself. Be so good as to wait for me but two minutes, and we will go together."

"This man crosses my path incessantly," said Charles, as he stood in the passage. "I was forced by an accident to introduce him at Vanderhorn's, and now, by another, I am forced to give him an opportunity to make good use of it. In future he shall go by himself, I engage for it."

The captain now reappeared in full uniform, and certainly looked very handsome. A formidable rival he might well be considered by any one, more especially by one upon whom jealousy had fixed her fangs. Charles Leslie was already sensible of this, and said little during the short ride to Vanderhorn's. The gentlemen of the company were all in the room, with Mrs. Stanley, who introduced the captain to Mr. Sydenham and Mr. Marchmont. With the others he was already acquainted, and particularly so with Mr. O'Connor. The young ladies came in soon afterwards with Mrs. Marchmont.

"Indeed, indeed," said Mr. O'Connor, affecting his

but they kept close to the main point, and never failed to make a deep impression upon their hearers."

"*'Humanum est errare,'* is the old adage," said Mr. Sydenham. "Mistakes are made by the people, no doubt, in the fitness as legislators, of many they send here. Nevertheless, I have strong confidence in their increasing intelligence, and certain of their attachment to republican government. Our eagle is destined to take a glorious flight!"

"Unless the British clip his wings," said the captain.

"That they will try it once and again, I have no doubt," replied Mr. Sydenham, "and that they will be disgraced, I am just as certain. We are too dilatory in making preparations for an event that is evidently approaching, and I fear that we shall suffer much before we can buckle on our armor, even for defence. But no fear that the sons of the Fathers of the war of the Revolution will not succeed as well in the next. Besides, there is our young navy, which, though not able to give battle in fleets, may disgrace them in fights between single ships, and thus destroy, in the opinion of Europe, the belief of British invincibility upon the ocean."

"But you said that Great Britain would try it once and again," said the captain. "When will that again be?"

"The next generation will see it," replied Mr. Sydenham. "A great naval power we must be, from our position. Our resources for it are inexhaustible. Our enemy is hastening us onwards towards it, and one great naval victory in fleets, decides her fate. It is a strange thing to me, that her statesmen are so blinded by ambition that they cannot take one look into futurity. Even Lord Chat-

ham was in this position when he said he 'would not suffer us to manufacture a hob-nail.' Was that great man not able to perceive the consequences sure to arise out of the increase of our population? And what madness to suppose that the resources of so vast a country as this were never to be brought forward, in order that the manufactories of a little island in the Atlantic might flourish! It is not less so in her statesmen now, to suppose that we cannot fight her successfully with single ships; and those who may be in power, half a century to come, may be just as blind in supposing that we cannot beat them in battle with fleets upon the ocean. But '*prius dementat.*' The mother may, one day, fly for protection to the daughter, after having ruined herself in vain efforts to arrest her progress to empire."

"It is impossible," said Mr. Marchmont, "to foresee what is to be the end of these astonishing events that are still convulsing the whole world. Great Britain may fall under the attacks of Bonaparte; but I doubt it. I have lately been in that country, and from what observation I could make, and from all I could learn, I am satisfied that her power is enormous, and still increasing; but that she is undermining the general prosperity of her people at home, is evident. The lands are now held by few, the great body of the English yeomanry, once the pride and strength of the nation, have nearly disappeared, and little is now seen but extremes, in the vast wealth of the aristocracy on the one hand, and the excessive poverty of the working classes on the other. She resembles Rome in the early period of her decline, when the senator possessed an

annual income of four thousand pounds weight of gold, and the people were fed by distributions of grain, bought by the public treasury. Her present are like death struggles: she strikes on every side; and in her attack upon the Chesapeake frigate, has roused up another enemy that may yet give her cause to repent it."

"And one day will commit similar outrages upon our territory," said Mr. Sydenham. "Yet I should be sorry to see her reduced under French domination. I have always detested her ever-grasping and ambitious projects; and, no doubt, the good of the world will require at some future period, that a league should be formed to check her, as much as a league is now thought necessary to check the ambition of the new Emperor of the French. There is no difference to speak of, between the universal empire on land of the French, and the universal empire on the sea of the British. Europe may resist the first; we shall have to resist the latter, and in doing it, repay Great Britain for the robberies, insults, and injuries she has heaped upon us for a century."

"From my heart," said Mr. O'Connor, "I wish she would loosen her hold on Old Ireland a bit. One of the most painful sights I ever saw, is the utter poverty of the vast mass of the Irish peasantry; and one of the most revolting to my feelings as an Irishman by descent, was to see the fat, sleek coachman of some English nobleman, cutting away from his box, with his whip, upon the bare-legged and famishing Irish boys, who were running at the side of the coach, begging for a penny. But let us stop," he added; "we lose ourselves in speculating upon futu-

rity, and my Irish blood is soon heated when I begin to talk of the degradation of my good old father's land. There, Mr. Sydenham, is the card-table just set out. Come here," said he, calling to the captain, "and give these gentlemen the pleasure of winning a half year of the pay they will vote you in the Army Appropriation Bill."

"It would be more agreeable," said the captain, "if the gentlemen would increase, instead of diminishing it."

"Fairly answered, captain," said Mr. Sydenham, as he rose to go near the table; the company at which had been increased by the entrance of some gentlemen from the adjoining house.

Mr. Marchmont was a Presbyterian, and did not play cards. Addressing Charles Leslie, "I am glad to find," said he, "that you reject card-playing even as an amusement. It is dangerous even as such, for it is very apt soon to become a passion."

"I reject it, Mr. Marchmont, from religious principles," said Charles.

"Better still, my young friend," replied Mr. Marchmont. "I have long lived in the world, and observed it closely, and am well satisfied that none other are sufficient to sustain us under the trials and difficulties to which we are constantly exposed. But have you ever considered the influence which Christianity has had upon civil liberty?"

Mr. Hollis had approached near enough to where Charles Leslie stood in conversation with Mr. Marchmont, to hear the question, and Charles's answer.

"I have had my attention much drawn to the subject," he replied, "in the course of my reading of history, and

found it to be of deep interest to all. But I found it also to be so extensive, that I am by no means master of all its details. What has particularly struck me, is this—that liberty, such as the great body of the people possessed under the feudal system, was lost under the false system of Romanism ; but had its origin again under the Puritans of England after the Reformation was preached by Luther, was enlarged, and finally established by their influence upon the English government.”

“What is that you have asserted, Mr. Leslie?” said Mr. Hollis, who had now joined them.

Charles repeated what he had just said to Mr. Marchmont.

“But do you not know,” said Mr. Hollis, “that liberty existed in Spain more than one hundred years before the Puritans arose?”

“Yes,” replied Charles; “and do you not know that it was lost in the defeat of Padilla by the Emperor Charles the Fifth?”

“Admit that, but you will see that liberty may have been originated without the aid of your favorite Puritans, and even amongst barbarous nations; such as those that overturned the Roman Empire.”

“Not such liberty as Christianity teaches and enforces,” replied Charles. “The Bible, in unfolding the relative duties of the rulers and the ruled, sets forth the social duties likewise in the most perfect manner, and founding them upon the divine authority, has, of necessity, produced a knowledge of human rights, infinitely beyond what even the Greeks and Romans, much less what barbarians knew. But the

question is not so much as to the extent of the knowledge of their rights as men, that different nations have possessed from age to age, but of the firmness which men exercised to recover them when lost, to give them further progress, and finally to establish and secure them. The liberty of the Spaniard, before the Reformation, though upheld by all the power of the Justiza, fell under the sword of the monarchy, as the liberty of the Frank, though upheld by all the power of the Mord Dom, had fallen long before under the sword of the aristocracy. The liberty which the Puritans of England originated, was extended vastly beyond that of the Spaniard or Frank, and when the contest with Charles the First came on, they were found to be a different sort of men to deal with, from the men of any nation who had preceded them, or who then existed. In the Bible they found their rights, and from the Bible they derived the firmness to establish them."

"Your knowledge of history," said Mr. Hollis, "appears to be so limited, you do not know that the rights of Englishmen were secured by Magna-Charta, in the reign of King John."

"Compare," replied Charles, "the provisions of Magna-Chart, extorted by the barons, (not by the people,) and mainly for their own advantage, with those of the Petition of Right, in the time of Charles the First, and you will perceive how much more extended are the latter. But Magna-Charta was repeatedly violated, and the most monstrous abuses of human rights existed, until the Reformation. What was liberty worth when the property of the subject could be levied upon by the crown for ship-money,

or forced loans exacted by the same authority ? Or where was the security for a man's life or limb when the Star-Chamber was in existence ?

"Your argument," said Mr. Hollis, "might be carried so far, as to attribute to the Puritans all the liberty that even we in the United States enjoy."

"It certainly may and ought," replied Charles Leslie. "We derive it from Englishmen, and even Hume, writing as a historian, was compelled, for his own reputation's sake, to say that 'the Puritans gave origin and progress to civil liberty ; and that to them, Englishmen owe all the freedom of their Constitution.' I have quoted him correctly. This admission on the part of an infidel, was extorted by facts so strong, that he could not deny them. However it may be elsewhere, we Marylanders certainly know whence our civil liberty was derived, for our Bill of Rights is nearly a transcript of that of the Puritans of England."

"It is absurd," said Mr. Hollis, "to found civil liberty upon fanaticism, and Hume himself, since you quote Hume, says they were fanatics."

"You are right, sir," said Charles, "Hume does say so ; but in that he lays himself open to the charge of ignorance, or inconsistency, or absurdity. I will use a passage of the Scriptures as an argument. 'How can a bad tree bring forth good fruit?' How then can fanaticism, a corrupt principle, originate and secure civil liberty ? Hume forgot himself strangely in that part of his history. I have thought it wonderful that this deep thinker did not perceive how he had committed himself. His pretended fanatics

were men of vast intellect, and were practical Christians, holding the great doctrine of the divinity of our Lord. You yourself bear the name of one of the most distinguished amongst them."

"I have no disposition whatever," replied Mr. Hollis, "to trace my descent from any such stock, nor ambitious of being considered as holding any such opinions. Christianity with us is at a low ebb: at the end of this generation, man, relying upon the dignity of human nature, will be able to see and to discharge all his duties by his own powers."

"He never has, never will, and never can," said Charles, "or there is no truth in what we read and see. Even in our own country we have had many men distinguished for great talents, yet infamous for some of the basest vices that can degrade human nature. And to make the case the stronger, such men are often found upon the seat of justice, to award the penalties of the law upon others less criminal than themselves; or to legislate for this rising country, when they themselves are ready to break the laws they have just made. Mr. Jefferson, in his Notes on Virginia, speaking upon the subject of slavery, says, 'I tremble for my country when I consider that God is just. I tremble for it when I see men swear to support the Constitution upon that book which commands 'Thou shalt do no murder,' and then see them seek each other's life before the session is at an end. Men may call this what they will, but I must tremble, as Mr. Jefferson says he did upon another subject, when I see practical atheists, and proved to be so by their conduct, seated either in our halls of

legislation, or upon the bench of justice. All the civil liberty we possess came through the Bible, and by the Bible only can it be perpetuated."

"Did the French, at the commencement of their revolution," inquired Mr. Hollis, "derive the knowledge of their rights from the Bible?"

"Certainly not," replied Charles Leslie; "and their efforts to establish civil liberty have ended in a military despotism. The religion of the Bible had been corrupted by Romanism, and by alliance with the state when the revolution broke out; and its horrors are a sad commentary upon the dignity of human nature, upon which you lay so much stress. There is also another period in French history, bearing strongly upon the question of results following internal disturbances, as affected by the principles which give rise to them. The league of the Fronde was convulsing France, at the time the Puritans were contending for civil liberty in England. The Frondeurs gained nothing: the Puritans everything. The French Frondeurs were Romanists: the English Puritans, Protestants. The contest was then, is now, and will continue to be, the Bible against despotism."

"If that is to be it," said Mr. Hollis, "we may as well submit to our fate at once. Great Britain herself, the mother of the Puritans, has much to learn yet as to the equality of human rights."

"No doubt," replied Charles. "Her church establishment is the cause of it, and it will one day prove her ruin, as Romanism did that of France. The alliance of church and state is the curse of the world. But the rulers of all

nations and in all ages, have ever perceived the influence which religion might bring to bear upon human conduct ; and have then bought up priests, or clergy, as the case might be, to aid the ambitious projects of the state. Thus, Christianity has been mixed up, in the Old World, with the worst passions of our nature ; until corruption having reached its height, revolutions necessarily follow. So far from being ended, they are but just begun."

"There is a vast dignity in human nature," said Mr. Hollis. "Enlarge it by education : it will secure us in the United States, and we will leave Europe to struggle into, or out of, her convulsions as she may."

"Education is very desirable, no doubt," replied Charles, "but let it be founded upon the Bible. Enlarge the human mind then, with science, as much as you will, and we are safe."

"Not upon the Bible," said Mr. Hollis, warmly, as he turned off to another part of the room ; "and for this, I have Mr. Jefferson's authority."

Mr. Marchmont had remained an interested listener to the young men, without interfering in any way between them. A Presbyterian himself, he was not a little pleased to find that Charles Leslie was well informed upon the subject on which he had been disputing with Mr. Hollis. Holding out his hand to him, "I am gratified, young gentleman," he said, "at the manner you have supported so good a cause. Your ground is firm : I have never myself met any one upon it, who can shake it. Your opponent replied by calling the Puritans fanatics. I have often had the same answer myself."

"I am a very poor advocate for so great a cause, Mr. Marchmont," replied Charles, "and rarely undertake it; but as Mr. Hollis seemed to seek the dispute, I would not decline it."

The conversation which had just taken place, was within hearing of Mrs. Marchmont, Clara, and Lucy. The earnestness with which it was carried on, and Mr. Marchmont's continued attention to it, had gradually engaged theirs also. "Did you hear that, girls?" said Mrs. Marchmont. "Whoever gets Mr. Hollis, will get a man who is to secure her happiness by the dignity of human nature, not by the influence of Christianity upon himself. You are exposed here, my child," she added seriously, turning to Lucy, "in a way that I did not expect, or I should hardly have let you come."

"I am in no danger, mamma," replied Lucy, "from Mr. Hollis, or his dignity, or infidelity."

Clara, too, had listened to the dispute between the rivals, as well as heard Mr. Marchmont's commendation of Charles, which some remains of her first attachment made yet sound pleasant to her. Her judgment, too, fully admitted the soundness of the principles he contended for, as alone conducive to happiness; but her pride combated violently against their practical application. Strange perversity of our nature, which Christianity only can explain, that the understanding may be convinced, yet the will refuse its assent!

CHAPTER VI.

It is a matter of deep interest to observe the variety and intenseness of the feelings which are constantly operating upon the human mind. The passions are incessantly at war with reason and conscience in the acquisition of whatever object happiness is supposed to consist in. With the mere man of the world, who pursues the world as his first, and last, and sole enjoyment, the passions have the full mastery over better and more ennobling motives. But with the professor of religion it is otherwise. He dare not pursue any object whatever, but with reference to the Divine government; and though he may, and often does suffer, like the martyr at the stake, he still cries out, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" or, in the language of his great High Priest, "Not my will, but thine be done." Perhaps, in those trials which so thickly beset our road through life, there are few that induce severer sufferings than those that spring from attachments deeply fixed. In such, there is something of a communion of mind perfectly intelligible to each, often without even the intervention of language. The thoughts that spring up in one heart, are instantly seized upon by the other, and the desire and effort to please, is as contemporaneous, as it is mutual. A bitter thing it is, when worldly, selfish motives

are suffered to separate two hearts thus united ; but very pleasant it is, when after trials long and severe, though better fitting them for each other, they are, at last, united by a Providence, as unfailing in its watchfulness, as it is unceasing in its goodness.

"Give space, Agnes," said Charles, after Mr. Marchmont had left him : and he seated himself between her and Lucy.

"Charles," said Agnes, "I have heard a sad account of you, from a lady of my acquaintance in Georgetown."

"What is it?" he inquired. "Nothing improper, I hope."

"Very hard-hearted on your part, any how," she replied. "It is, of the decided preference a lady has shown for you, and the cold manner in which you have received it."

Charles found himself embarrassed. "It is not worth while to reply seriously to such a charge," said he. "I do not expect, or wish for advances on the part of any lady ; that would be to reverse, as Mr. Jefferson says, the order of antecedent relations."

"You see, Lucy," said Agnes, laughing, "he does not deny it, but only evades it. But you had no business to tell it, Charles."

"I never did," he replied. Desirous of changing the subject, he turned upon Agnes.

"I see what you are after," said he. "You know I promised to wait for you, and you are now afraid I shall remind you of it. How is it, Miss Marchmont ? Can you tell me who is my rival ?"

"Not positively, as yet," replied Lucy; "but I can guess and calculate about it."

"Then I see from your expressions," said Charles, "that it must be some gentleman from down East. You faithless Agnes, to give me up so soon! Are you not afraid that I shall drown myself?"

"Not in the least, Charles, on my account, or on account of any one else. I have been very faithful to you for four years, and I think that ought to satisfy you. Besides, if I happen to like another better than you, how can I help it?"

"Very true, Agnes. Love accommodates itself to an easy morality, very readily at Washington."

Their attention was now drawn to a conversation which was going on between Clara, Mrs. Stanley, and the captain, who had just asked Clara to waltz with him, at the approaching Assembly.

"You must excuse me, sir," said Clara. "I do not waltz."

"Not waltz!" said the captain, with surprise. "May I ask the reason?"

"I have been taught, sir," she replied, "that such exhibitions are not consistent with female decorum. Public opinion, as yet at least, has put its disapprobation upon it."

"Public opinion is a fool," said Mrs. Stanley. "Let me advise you, Miss Sydenham, to disregard it, as I do. I follow or adopt what I like, and leave it to others to say what they like. There can be no greater tyranny than the old-fashioned notions about decorum, propriety, public opinion, and such like."

"That is a road, Mrs. Stanley," said Clara, "which I am

not disposed to walk in. There are but a few steps between a disregard of propriety and the absence of any."

"This is prudery, downright, Miss Sydenham," replied Mrs. Stanley. "I had hoped that the society at Washington had by this time rubbed out the rustic notions you brought here; and I think that Captain Jackson has cause to consider himself as insulted by your refusal."

"Captain Jackson must judge of that for himself, madam," said Clara; "but no doubt he will recollect, that the objection was to the dance only."

Mrs. Stanley had formed a very false estimate of Clara's character, and held in contempt the principles of propriety which the ladies of the olden times early inculcated into their daughters. She little expected, therefore, the pointed refusal to be influenced by her, that Clara had evinced; and was, moreover, piqued by the imputation upon herself, which Clara's expressions had plainly implied. With disgust in her manner, and muttered terms about ignorance of society and prudery, she rose and went to another part of the room. The captain kept his seat, and continued the conversation with Clara, who, too well bred to give any evidence that she considered what had passed, as personality, made an effort, by her usual urbanity of manners, to show him that she was willing to treat him with the politeness which the rules of society required. But this only confirmed him in the opinion that he was advancing towards the attainment of his object, to which he had determined to make either Clara or Lucy subservient. In this, however, he was mistaken. His attentions to each had been alike particular, as opportunities offered; and when

they retired to their room at night, never failed to be commented upon, laughed at, and communicated to Mrs. Marchmont. As yet, all his batteries had made no impression whatever upon the citadels, either of which he now thought he might summon to surrender.

But while these operations were going on in one quarter, whence Charles Leslie had apprehended so much danger, one of a more serious nature was rapidly rising in another, which he had not thought of. Cold as Mr. Hollis appeared to be, he was, however, extremely sensitive to female loveliness, and the charms of female conversation, directed by a fine judgment, and enlivened by a wit that could amuse him. In the course of this evening, Charles Leslie had observed, for the first time, his close attentions to Clara, and a pang had shot through his heart. He saw plainly that all his fears might soon be realized. To a man of Mr. Hollis's standing, there could be no objection on Clara's part, unless his infidel opinions, of which he was a bold asserter upon all occasions, might cause his rejection. But he had no reason to expect that they would. Clara had never come under such religious influences, that he knew of, which might determine her to reject a man otherwise unexceptionable, merely for his disbelief of revelation. He saw that the moment of deciding, whether his hope of ever winning Clara, by the value she might set upon his own principles, was rapidly approaching. "Be it so," he said; "let her meet the trial, and I will bear the result, for I feel assured that I shall be able to do it. Dear as she is to me still,—mixed up as she has long been with every thought of happiness on earth I have had for years,—I would not

wish to call her mine, unless she believed and felt that the religious principles I profess are those, and those only, which could best secure her happiness."

Clara, on her part, had begun to be sensible to her own position as it regarded Mr. Hollis. A woman's tact was at no loss to discover the meaning of attentions, which had now become too particular to be any longer misunderstood,—and her pride was operating powerfully with her, to influence the decision. A man of character and standing, she saw was soon to be at her feet: an elevated position in society would be secured by a connection with him; and what more could she expect? It might then be considered as foolish to refuse an offer so eligible, and which might not soon, if ever, be made again by any one. True, his infidel opinions alarmed her in some degree; for though brought up in a way that gave her no clear insight into the nature of Christianity until she had heard Charles Leslie explain it to her mother,—his words upon that occasion had sunk deep into her heart, and the internal monitor was now inquiring, what security she had for happiness in life with a man who scoffed at the obligations imposed upon the passions by the precepts of revelation. Still, her pride, though the scales were yet even in the balance, seemed likely to weigh the heaviest; nor did her thoughts of Charles Leslie add anything to counterbalance it. She thought of him, it is true,—of his long attachment; his conversation with her mother perpetually recurred to her like a warning voice; but the dissipation at Washington had produced its usual effect,—her mind had begun to imbibe the infection—the gangrene was spreading,—and the

image of Mr. Hollis, if it had not actually displaced that of Charles Leslie in her heart, was seated alongside of it. She had, however, as yet formed no positive determination upon the subject; upon which, though she well knew that her happiness depended, she was not so fully aware how soon she might be called upon to decide it.

Mr. Hollis, on his part, had been no careless observer of what had been passing before him. His apprehensions, first excited by the captain's assiduities, had been quieted with respect to him, only to be more keenly aroused by his observing that Charles Leslie held frequent conversations with Clara. But his penetration was completely at fault to ascertain whether Clara received him as a candidate for her heart, or merely as an old and valued acquaintance of her family. Still under the influence of the feeling of mortification he had sustained in his dispute with Charles upon the progress of civil liberty, he determined to draw something from Clara by which he might discover their relative positions. Taking a vacant seat by her, in the course of the evening, and engaging her attention for a short time, by varying it with remarks respecting Mr. Longfield, and Mr. O'Connor, "And there is Mr. Leslie," said he, directing Clara's attention towards Charles, who was again conversing with Mr. Marchmont; "he is, I believe, Miss Sydenham, an acquaintance of yours. Is he from the same part of Maryland as your father?"

"He is," Clara replied, "an old acquaintance: that is, ever since he left college. His family is of the same county as ours, and, I may add, one of the oldest and most respectable in it."

"I find that he is in a subordinate situation here," said Mr. Hollis, dexterously bringing his own in contrast with that of Charles. "It is often an unpleasant thing to me to find, that greater distinctions are not made in company at Washington. Do you not think that the reception is too general?"

"I have never thought about it," replied Clara. "It has been sufficient for me, hitherto, that I have been pleased with the company at our house, and I have left it to better judgments to say who should compose it."

"Am I to understand you," he asked, "that Mr. Leslie's visits are particularly agreeable? For my part," he added, "it would be more agreeable that he carried his puritanical notions elsewhere."

"Mr. Leslie," Clara replied, "has the power to be very agreeable, or disagreeable, as he pleases: or, as to the latter, perhaps it may be that his plain and pointed condemnation of what he considers wrong in morals, never fails to make him so to others."

"I find his ideas a mass of absurdity," said Mr. Hollis. "Christianity, upon which he is for building everything, is driven out from 'William and Mary,' as I hope it soon will be from the world, which it has burdened with opinions, superstitious, fanatical, or subversive of the dignity of human nature."

Finding himself defeated in his object by Clara's guarded answers, he turned into a different channel; where his powers of conversation, intermingled with delicate attentions, soon effaced the feeling of apprehension which the

expression of his hatred of Christianity had excited for a moment. And thus it is in this strange world ! Our election of good or evil is constantly presented to us, and "we stand in jeopardy every hour." Nor can ignorance be pleaded. The contending principles are within us, incessantly engaged in the struggle, to which we can no more be unconscious, than we can be to our natural existence. "Fearfully and wonderfully are we made," and who is there that breathes, that at some period or other of life, has not known the place and hour when, in this awful contest, he was either conqueror or conquered !

It so happened, from the position in which Charles Leslie stood, talking with Mr. Marchmont, that he had heard Mr. Hollis's denunciation of Christianity, and it had led him to notice his close attentions to Clara, and their effect. His apprehensions were now greatly increased ; and he determined to have a conversation with her as soon as he could, and warn her, as far as propriety would allow him to do so, of the consequences that might result from her placing her happiness in the power of a man, who, with all the pride of a native of the Old Dominion afloat in his composition, had superadded upon it the still more exceptionable dogmas of infidelity, unhappily then too prevalent in Virginia, and indeed elsewhere. A moment's reflection, however, showed him that he would have no chance for this, for some time to come. An Assembly was soon to take place,—to be followed by a party at the Secretary of State's,—and successively at other dignitaries ; and he thus found himself compelled to await, as well as he could, the

end of all this round of dissipation. With quite as much upon his mind, of fears, internal agitation, and conflicting emotions as he could well bear, he soon afterwards left the room.

CHAPTER VII.

"SEE, captain," said Mr. Lewis, as he entered the room on the evening he returned from Vanderhorn's, "you have dropped something out of your hat; a glove, I think. Is it *un gage de bataille* which you have picked up, or *un gage d'amour* which you have received? Be it which it may, you are making your way, I find, in our city."

"I would rather consider it as the latter," replied the captain, "and perhaps you will think it is so, when you look at the size of it."

"It is a lady's, indeed," said Mr. Lewis; "a trophy won already, captain? You carry on operations like a French general of these days, or like Cæsar of old, who could write to the Roman Senate, '*veni, vidi, vici.*' I had some thoughts of entering the lists with you myself this winter, but your brisk movements have somewhat daunted me. Perhaps, however, I may turn your flank, though I may not be able to meet you in front. May I know the name of the owner of the glove?"

"How can you ask it?" replied the captain, gayly. "I keep those matters secret. It is accident only that has put you in possession of the knowledge you have: an engagement only with the fair owner would justify me in giving her name."

"If that is your position," replied Mr. Lewis, "I do not despair of beating you yet. Many a battle that has been thought to be won, has been lost after all."

"The commanders then," said the captain, "must have had but little experience or skill in their profession. The first impression should be followed up, and bringing forward all the reserved forces at the critical moment, the enemy must then yield."

"Operations with ladies, at least in this city," replied Mr. Lewis, "do not altogether resemble those of a field of battle. The reserve on their side consists of cool-headed, or calculating, or covetous, or ambitious fathers, who can create a rout from a quarter whence an attack was not expected."

"I am under no apprehensions from any of them."

"Don't be too sure," said Mr. Lewis; "you may meet with your match yet, and more than your match. The ladies at Washington are of the highest style of fashion, accomplishments, and intellect, in our country, and are not such an easy conquest as you may suppose."

"So much the more honor," replied the captain, with great consequence of manner, "in carrying off one of them. It would be a greater conquest than seizing a pair of colors in the heat of an engagement."

"I am curious to see the result of your campaign, I confess, and think I shall be able at the Assembly to judge better of your talents. But I repeat to you, do not be too confident."

"Very well," replied the captain, "then we meet again

at Philippi. Make your observations, and you will admit that my confidence is well founded."

Mr. Lewis was a gentleman of high character, who had served abroad in a public situation of considerable trust. He had been residing in Washington for some time past, awaiting a new appointment which had been promised to him. He was well acquainted with the world, lively, full of wit and anecdote, and unexceptionable in his deportment throughout. He possessed an almost intuitive perception of the weak side of a man's character; and discovering in a moment the excessive vanity which marked captain Jackson's, determined to affect a disbelief of his powers of attracting and fixing the beauty assembled at Washington, and thus lead him to display more conspicuously a weakness too prevalent with military men.

The breakfast table was scarcely cleared away the next morning, when Mrs. Stanley drove up to the door, and inquired for Captain Jackson. He immediately went down to her, and after some short conversation with her at the carriage, handed her out, and then led her to the drawing-room, which was now vacant.

"I wished to see you, George," she said, "to learn from you what prospects you have here. Are you confident of making interest with the Government? Appearances for an increase of the army, I learn from good authority, are more and more promising. Have you decided, as yet, how to make the interest you will need, most available? Friends are absolutely necessary everywhere, when anything is to be obtained in the nature of appointments; and young as our government is, you may be sure that it

is as necessary here, as it is at the Tuilleries, or at St. James's."

"I know of no mode," he replied, "by which my wishes could be furthered, better than by that I mentioned when I first called upon you. Both Mr. Marchmont and Mr. Sydenham have no small interest here, and I am carrying on my movements with the young ladies with very fair prospects of success. But I think you went too far with Miss Sydenham the last evening. It might be more prudent not to lay open to her your own opinions, with so little disguise."

"I am very independent, as you know," said the lady, "in thinking, speaking, and acting; and I have found women enough here ready imitators in all. But I saw you in close conversation with Miss Sydenham after I left you, and afterwards with Miss Marchmont. To which of them do you intend to apply your most vigorous operations?"

"I can hardly say yet to which," he replied, "nor, to speak out, do I much care. Probably the Assembly may decide it. It will be an exciting time, and an excitable company. I do not think that any place presents such opportunities for close attentions and impressions, as parties where music, dancing, wine, and dress are all found, and are all combined to put the blood in rapid circulation. Upon an occasion like that near at hand, I make no question that I could form an engagement with both of the ladies, in the course of the evening, and half a dozen more besides. Do you think that these Assemblies are for any purpose on earth, but to assist young people to fall in love, as it is called, with one another?"

“And to give older people opportunities of profiting by their follies,” said Mrs. Stanley. “Many a time have I laughed heartily at the vexation plainly seen, under the most mortifying disappointments that the mothers and daughters have met with, in finding the arrows aimed at the breast of one gentleman, fall harmless at his feet, or strike another, not thought of, nor cared for. And all this planning and scheming carried on under the pretence of amusement, of seeing Congress in session, or of dining at the President’s. And these mothers are so nice, that they forbid some particular kinds of dances, and the daughters are so dutiful as to obey ! It is all affectation, depend upon it. Their coming here is proof against them ; and they might just as well stick up a notice, ‘ Two daughters just arrived, and ready to be disposed of in marriage. Inquire within.’ Real virtue, if there be any such thing, does not seek temptation in order to test its strength, and would even shun dissipation as dangerous. You may, then, I assure you again, consider the women as waiting to jump into your arms ; and you, in that mode, may jump into the command of a regiment.”

“I hope so,” said the captain, “and hope it may be soon. In fact, my leave of absence will be out in two weeks at furthest, and I have had a pretty plain hint already from the War Department, that my presence with the regiment would be more agreeable than it is at Washington. I must therefore make all the dispatch I can, in securing interest ; I can then leave the city with confidence, and my engagement standing over. After all, I begin to find my feelings somewhat concerned in my success, as well as

my interest. Both these ladies are so showy and accomplished, that I should fall in love, as it is called, if such a thing could happen to me."

"As to that, George," replied Mrs. Stanley, "you could not do a more foolish thing. A man, who knows as much of the world as you do, should be done with such feelings, and with talking such nonsense. Advancement in life is the great object, and the manner of securing it the main thing to be looked to."

"You know very well," said the captain, "that I agree with you in these matters. But how do you get on with your claims upon the Government?"

"Not to my satisfaction as yet," she replied. "There is an indisposition to act upon such cases at present. I have, however, promises of an appointment abroad for Henry."

"That is something, however," said the captain. "I see you are much waited upon by Senators and members of the House: I suppose you obtained their interest with the President."

"Never mind, George," replied the lady, "how I manage: see to your own concerns."

CHAPTER VIII.

It was but a short time before this, that Burr's conspiracy, as it was then called, had been completely put down, and a fair prospect presented itself that both France and Great Britain would cease to harass our commerce, and violate our rights. The Government had evidently gained strength by the first; the realization of the second would have confirmed the wisdom of Mr. Jefferson's pacific policy: but it was not destined to be so. The company at Vanderhorn's were all assembled in the drawing-room, when the servant announced Mr. Randolph. This celebrated man was now in the opposition, and as conversation, wherever he might be, necessarily led to politics, a long discussion took place, in which the Virginian did not fail to give vent to the ill-humor which he felt against the administration. Growing tired at length, he withdrew from the congressional circle, which was still discussing subjects bearing upon the future prospects and glory of the Union, and joining the ladies, had engaged in an animated conversation with them. Lucy had just executed some pieces of Italian music, by Rossini, in elegant style, to which he had been listening. When she had finished, "Thank you, Miss Marchmont," he said, "for your fine execution, which is all, in this kind of music, I am able to

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judge of; though passionately fond of simple melodies, which, accompanied by fine sentiments, reach the heart."

"Of what nation, Mr. Randolph," inquired Clara, "is your favorite music, and what pieces?"

"The Scotch, by all means, Miss Sydenham," he replied. "None other affect me so powerfully; and of all that I have heard, the beautiful song of 'John Anderson, my Jo, John,' is my favorite." He then repeated the last verses in his inimitable manner.

"John Anderson, my Jo, John,
Frae year to year we've past,
And soon the year maun come, John,
Will bring us to our last :
But let na that affright us, John,
Our hearts were ne'er our foe,
While in innocent delight we've lived,
John Anderson, my Jo.

"John Anderson, my Jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither.
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And we'll sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my Jo."

He then requested Clara to sing and play it. She immediately took her seat at the piano, and in the execution of the music, and in her fine voice, did equal justice to the poet and the composer. She then turned over the leaves of her music-book, and played and sang other pieces of a similar character, while this man of many passions stood ab-

sorbed in the emotions which had thus been aroused within him.

"Many thanks to you, Miss Sydenham," he said, when Clara arose from her seat, "for the pleasure which you have given to me. It is matter of surprise to me, that any other description of music should ever have superseded these simple and artless appeals to the heart, for which, in my opinion, the Scotch songs are unrivalled."

"And yet, the professional man," said Mrs. Marchmont, "receives little gratification from simple melodies, while his whole soul will seem to be engrossed by the long and complex pieces of Italian or German music."

"Very true, madam," replied Mr. Randolph; "that is the metaphysics of music, of which very few, comparatively, can know anything. But simple music, with appropriate sentiments, finds its way to the heart universally, and arouses up its best feelings, by recalling vividly to the mind the hours of our youth, when the world had neither cheated us by its falsehood, nor vitiated us by its maxims. If a man never knew sentiment in youth, I doubt if he could ever feel the power of music in more advanced life."

"You speak of music, Mr. Randolph," returned Mrs. Marchmont, "as if it might be useful even to men. It has generally been considered as an accomplishment, and nothing more, for a lady to while away an hour or two in amusing with sweet sounds, some young gentleman who was not able to amuse her with agreeable conversation."

"Yes, madam, useful to man, certainly," he replied. "Whatever tends to humanize, to soften him, is useful to him; for in my conscience, I think he is a very hard sub-

ject. Fine music from a fine woman, would have more effect than almost anything else that could be brought to bear upon his barbarism. You see how much power I attribute to the ladies."

"Thanks for your good opinion," said Mrs. Marchmont. "But your expression—*fine*—needs explanation. What do you comprehend in it, Mr. Randolph?"

"A knowledge of all the duties, madam," he replied, "that belong to a woman in her station as a wife, mother, and mistress; and this knowledge founded upon Christianity. That will constitute a fine woman; and all may thus be fine women. Add to it, if you please, the adventitious accomplishments of music and drawing, provided there be natural talents for their acquisition; and the French and Italian languages, if there be a fondness for extensive reading. I think this will do; for the ornamental will then be combined with what is useful. The female mind having thus resources of its own, and the woman, having her appropriate avocations, will have no wish to seek what is called pleasure, out of her own domestic circle."

"You have omitted dancing, Mr. Randolph, in your list of accomplishments," said Mrs. Stanley.

"It was designedly done, madam," he replied. "I do not consider it an accomplishment in a lady. The ease of manners, which, it is generally supposed, is acquired by a knowledge of dancing, is all artificial, and very different from that arising from a consciousness of innate propriety. The lady, whose manners are formed by dancing, is noted for an over-sprightliness—a hop-and-skip sort of motion, an effort to attract attention; while, also, the movements,

changes of posture, motions of the limbs, and familiarities sanctioned by the figures of the dance, have no very favorable tendency, in my opinion, to preserve the maidenly diffidence which so greatly enhances the charms of female loveliness. In a word, I detest it ; nor can I see it, but in my imagination, I see the dancing girls of the East."

"This is very severe, Mr. Randolph," said Mrs. Stanley.

"But it is just, madam," he replied. "The welfare of society rests upon female influence in a far greater degree than is generally supposed ; and female education, in every way, should be of such firm texture, that it cannot be torn, or worn out. No tinsel for women's minds. This is my opinion ; for it is unquestionable, that the first principles of good or of evil are ingrafted into the young heart by maternal instruction, or suffered to grow up there by maternal neglect. I perfectly remember my own mother, when she called me to her, and explaining to me, in language suited to my age, my relation to the Supreme Being as my Creator and Father, made me kneel and place my little hands together, while she taught me the comprehensive prayer which our Lord gave for the instruction of mankind. This was the first lesson, followed up by others, as I grew older ; and the impressions, thus made, nothing, as yet, has effaced. No : I do not estimate too highly, the influence of woman upon society ; nor am I too severe upon any sort of education which might tend to lessen their favorable influence upon morals, by substituting what are called accomplishments, in place of real virtues."

Mrs. Stanley was now quite willing to escape from this severe censor, and changed the subject by remarking,

"That neither music nor painting had yet produced anything amongst us, which gave promise that we should hand down to posterity, through them, the events of the war of our Independence."

"Very little, as yet, madam," replied Mr. Randolph. "What Trumbull has produced in historical painting is of a very mediocre description, and his pencil is all we have, in that line. In music, we have two marches, and Yankee Doodle; and I believe that is all. But the fine arts will certainly flourish here, in one generation more; for it is necessary that the events, or persons intended to be commemorated by historical painting, or by music, should be shrouded over by some antiquity, at least. Our revolutionary war will present a vast field for future historians, novelists, painters, poets, and musicians, and the national genius appear in a light to gratify our highest ambition."

Rising from his seat as he was speaking, he bowed to the ladies, and was going to the door, when he espied Charles Leslie, who had been some time in the room, in conversation with Mr. Marchmont. He immediately turned and went to him. Charles had been introduced to Mr. Randolph by Captain Decatur, and was greatly struck with his new acquaintance. The perfect ease of his manners, his power of putting others at ease in his company, his varied conversation, suited to the highest capacity, or adapting itself to the lowest, was as novel to Charles as it was interesting. He had never, he thought, seen a man to compare to him in manners or conversation. After talking a few moments longer with Charles, he left the room, declining Mr. Marchmont's invitation to supper, as he had,

he said, "some arguments to arrange for his speech the next morning;" for which, by the rules of the House, he had the floor.

Clara had noticed what was passing, and had observed the estimation in which gentlemen of high distinction appeared to hold her first admirer. With Mr. Marchmont she knew that he was a favorite, and she had just seen that Mr. Randolph had honored him with his attention. Although she had been flattered, and her pride gratified by Mr. Hollis's assiduities, which were daily more and more plain, they had not effaced the feelings of preference which Charles Leslie had once excited. She was continually comparing him in her mind, with her new suitor, and the balance would at once have preponderated in his favor, but for his religious opinions. She had determined for some days past, to put his principles to the test, by asking him to go to the Assembly. "Perhaps," she said to herself, "the society at Washington may have made him less rigid in his notions: I wish I had an opportunity to talk with him. If he consents to go, I am decided."

Charles, on his part, sought a conversation with her more anxiously than she did with him. He had observed Mr. Hollis's attentions to her with extreme apprehension, and was very desirous of knowing, if he could, how far they were well-founded. But this was no easy matter, for his rival was constantly near her, and engrossing her attention in every way he could. Charles had been on the watch, for some time, for a vacant seat near her, but to no purpose. If one seat was empty, Mr. Hollis, as if determined to prevent a conversation, obstinately kept his posi-

tion. "Lucy," whispered Clara to her, "you know that I have two admirers in the room : I wish to have some conversation with one whom I see a little way off, and I wish you to amuse the other who is close by, while I do so. Do, pray, help me in my difficulty; and if ever you get in the like, let me know, and I will do you the same good turn."

"I am not so well off as you are, Clara," replied Lucy, laughing, "as to have two to manage : in fact, I have quite enough to do to manage Mr. Campbell, whom, you know, my good father is willing to receive as his son-in-law. But as he is not here to-night, I will do all in my power to assist you."

She remained quiet for a little while, and then requested Mr. Hollis to explain to her some historical prints, a large volume of which lay on a table on the other side of the room. They accordingly went off together, and Charles soon occupied Lucy's chair.

"I wished to see you, Mr. Charles Leslie," said Clara, in her best manner. "I have a request to make of you. Will you grant it?"

"I don't know : I must first be informed what it is."

"Do you think I would make an improper one?" she asked.

"You would not, if you were at home," Charles replied. "I cannot answer for what Washington may have already done with you."

"Your confidence in me then is lowered : is it so?"

"Waive all that at present," Charles replied, "and let me know your wishes."

"The Assembly takes place," she said, "the day after to-morrow, and it is the first at which Agnes and myself will have been since our arrival in the city. I feel nervous already at the thoughts of it. An old acquaintance like you, would assist much towards removing the embarrassment which we expect to feel upon such a novel occasion. We have been, Charles, at many a ball together during our long acquaintance, and I request you will be at this. Will you go with us? Now, don't refuse; I am really anxious for it."

Charles, affecting a very demure manner, told her "he was too old."

"Do answer me," she said; "will you go with us?"

Charles still continued his manner, with some dash of badinage. "I have not time, Clara," said he, "to fix upon my dress for such a brilliant occasion. My silk inner vests, and red cuffs, which made us cut so fine a figure when I was a young man, are all gone; and now I think of it, I do not believe that I have a single pair of silk stockings left. And as to another part of my wardrobe, verily, they too have disappeared before the new fashion. Why did you not ask me two weeks since?"

"Charles, this is not politeness," said Clara. "I am serious in my request, and again ask you to answer me seriously."

He instantly resumed his usual manner—"I shall always believe whatever you say, Clara, and now, that I see that you are serious in your request, answer, by expressing my regret, that you are so. We have known one another for a long while, and I had hoped that, by this time, you had

known me well enough to be satisfied, that if I saw proper to govern my conduct by religious principles, I could not be made to change such determination by any one. I am really sorry to find that I am lowered in your opinion."

"You have no right," Clara replied, "to put such a construction upon my request, because I do not see the force of your motives—principles—if you will have it so."

"It would be unreasonable in me, perhaps, to expect that you should, young as you are, flattered as you are, sought after, as I believe you are. I make every allowance for your position, but it is not the less evident, that the dissipation of Washington has had an unfavorable influence upon your mind already, and may have upon your character hereafter. Now, restrain," he added, "the tokens of resentment which your face has indicated in one moment. I must, and will be honest with you."

"And as harsh and unkind at Washington, as at home."

"If you will think so, you must; but let me appeal to your own heart. You are going to the Assembly in pursuit of pleasure. Would it not give you greater, to go and relieve the necessities of the poor widow and her two grand-daughters, of whose destitute condition I was telling you and Miss Marchmont, the last evening I saw you? The cost of the ornaments which you will wear at the Assembly, so unnecessarily, would do this for the whole winter. I appeal to your own heart to say, which would afford the highest pleasure."

"Charles, Charles, this is not fair."

"But it is fair," he replied, "thus to contrast as strikingly as possible, the woman of real virtue, with the mere woman

of pleasure. I appeal too, to your understanding. You ask me to do what you know I should consider as a departure from my religious principles. Were I so weak as to give way, you yourself would be among the first to condemn me, and if you ever respected me, you would do so no longer. I appeal to yourself upon this question."

"It is not the question just now," said Clara, "as to what I might think or say. Do you mean to throw yourself out of the society in which you have always heretofore moved? You will lose caste utterly, in persisting in your present course of life."

"I have not the least apprehension," he replied, "of losing caste with that part of society which is certainly the most estimable. My religious principles are well known, for I never deny them, and still, I number among my friends, men of high distinction, and ladies of great worth and standing in society. My principles have already added immensely to my happiness, and by enabling me to keep a steadier course, promise even to advance my temporal interests."

"I find it no easy matter to understand you to-night," said Clara: "I ask you to go to the Assembly, and you give me for answer, 'That if you did, I would not respect you.' This is to make me act very inconsistently, at best."

"Your request," replied Charles, "is dictated merely by the excitement of the moment. Your opinion the next day, would be the result of your judgment. I am not yet afraid to appeal to it, but how long it will be, I know not. Washington is a place where excitement is constantly in operation in the fashionable world, as well as in the politi-

cal. You will not get out of it as unsophisticated as you came into it."

"I may be wiser, however," she replied with emphasis.

"Little is to be gained by that," Charles replied, "if it be at the expense of artlessness."

"Charles," said Clara, "all this may be very well at a more advanced period of life, but what has it all to do with such young persons as we are? I wish to spend a few hours agreeably, and ask you to go with us, and the answer is, a long lecture on morality. Have you sent your wits into the moon?"

"Higher still, I trust," he replied. "I cannot go to the Assembly. Nay, why draw yourself up to such a height? And that toss of your head! And now, that look! Indeed, I am about to lose caste with Miss Sydenham, I see, if not with others."

"Perhaps so, at least," said Clara, "if you cannot have your own notions, without censuring my behavior."

"You have only then to say so, with candor," replied Charles, "and it shall be so. Such an interruption to a long acquaintance, much of which will ever be pleasant in my remembrance, go as the world may with me, must needs be painful, and the more so, in finding that Clara Sydenham at Washington, was not what I had known her to be elsewhere. But do you see those looks this way," he continued, directing her attention towards Lucy and Mr. Hollis, "your gallant,—admirer,—what do you call him? seems to think that I am out of my place, and that you might be more agreeably occupied. I will not tax your patience, Clara, and you will soon have him near you."

Now, open both your ears, and take all the flattery that will be poured into them : believe that you are perfect—that you are irresistible : believe it all, for you will hear it in fine language, and from a member of Congress. But when you hear it all, remember this, that you are rapidly approaching a point in your moral probation that may decide your fate. Beware, how you put your happiness in the power of an Infidel. Good night.”

Charles then strode across the room to where Mr. Sydenham and Mr. Marchmont were standing, and after a few moments' conversation with them, Clara saw the door close upon the tall figure of her inflexible, but true lover. Charles understood her character well, and knew how to apply his remarks so as to bear strongly both upon her feelings and her judgment. In this way only, he was determined to win her, if to win her were possible. His own feelings, impetuous at times, might, he was aware, occasionally lead him too far in what he might say ; but even in this he might think it probable, that such exhibition of the interest he took in whatever concerned her, might not be without its effect, in increasing hers for him. Clara, on her part, was gratified alike by his appeal to her judgment, as to her heart ; but pride, the great fault in her character, was constantly at war with her better principles. “ I am refused then,” she thought, as the door closed upon Charles, “ in so trifling a matter, and that too, though I pressed my request upon him. Very well, Mr. Charles Leslie, it shall be one while before I put it in your power to do it again.” But the monitor within was still awake, and busy with her. “ Yes, it is so,” again she thought ; “ he has a right to

the exercise of his own principles, as much as I have to form my own wishes ; and if he had given them up merely to please me, I should not have respected him as much the next morning as I did the evening before. But he warns me about putting my happiness in the power of an Infidel. Then he is jealous of Mr. Hollis, and perhaps if I excite his fears, I may make him more compliant in future. No—that will not do. I know him too well to expect it. He will never come back to his former habits and amusements, but hopes to bring me to his habits and his sources of happiness ; and that I cannot do. Then I approach, he says, a point in my moral probation which may decide my fate ! What a strange effect his words always have upon me !” Thus undecided, the war of the judgment and the passions still raging, she could fix upon nothing determinate, but left it to events, as they might arise, to decide, whether her pride or her better principles should finally triumph.

For some time after Mr. Hollis had opened the prints, his attention in explaining them to Lucy, was fixed upon the subjects as they appeared in turning over the leaves. But after awhile, portraits of distinguished characters were seen, and amongst them, that of the celebrated Mary, Queen of Scots. Miss Marchmont was immediately struck with the likeness in the contour of the face to Clara’s, and calling Mr. Hollis’s attention to it, both of them looked at Clara to make the comparison. He then observed the close and earnest conversation in which she was engaged with Charles Leslie. The explanations of the prints instantly became vapid, the leaves were turned over rapidly, and Mr. Hollis gave plain demonstrations to Lucy, that he

wished to be released. Lucy, seeing that she had given Clara all the time that could be gained, and not wishing, by pressing him to continue, to be suspected of the trick which she had so successfully executed, rose up from the table. Mr. Hollis soon re-occupied his place near Clara.

"What have you done with the young Puritan, Miss Sydenham?" he inquired of Clara. "Has he been paying his devoirs to you out of the Lamentations?"

But Clara was not yet prepared to discard her old, for her new admirer. Whatever effect Mr. Hollis's attentions might have produced, it was not sufficient to cause any indication on her part, that he was to reign, at once, in a heart which had been, in some degree at least, once occupied by his rival. Her confidence in Charles Leslie was still undiminished, and the estimation in which she plainly saw that he was held by gentlemen of high standing, as a promising young man, as yet, counterbalanced the weight which Mr. Hollis possessed from his political position only. Neither in person, manners, nor acquired knowledge, did she consider him as superior to Charles. She accordingly replied in a careless manner, that "she believed he had left the room, and that she did not know of any cause for the lamentations referred to."

"Perhaps, then," said Mr. Hollis, "I ought to have made use of a term exactly the reverse. Miss Marchmont and myself were comparing the face of the Queen of Scots with your own, and this caused me to observe the close, I may say, the impassioned conversation which was going on between you."

"Mr. Leslie," replied Clara, "has his own opinions, and

his own peculiar mode of expressing them; serious, or lively, and sometimes animated. At times, I differ with him: and this directly leads him to a manner which you call impassioned."

"And I suppose," said Mr. Hollis, "he never fails to make his remarks hinge upon his religious notions. I have met with some persons in my life who held the same, but none so young, nor more rigid. They are perfectly ridiculous, and suitable only to times of ignorance, when men surrendered the mind to the domination of the clergy, but are childish in this 'Age of Reason.'"

Whoever has closely observed the world, will have seen a strange fatuity in men when absorbed in some one subject, in obtruding their views of it upon every occasion, without considering what bearing their doing so might have upon their own interest or wishes. One moment's reflection might have led Mr. Hollis to perceive, that the open and uncalled-for profession of his infidel opinions, was in nowise necessary to advance his suit with Clara, but most probably, might even be injurious. But led away by the prevalent influence of an hatred of Christianity then operating powerfully throughout our country, he was continually striving upon every occasion, to throw contempt, as well upon Christianity itself, as ridicule upon those who professed it.

"I am not so fully acquainted with this great subject, Mr. Hollis," replied Clara, "as to venture a dispute respecting it. I have been brought up to respect and believe in the Scriptures, as the only sure guide to happiness in this world and the next; and I think it is fair to say, that

in arguing this question, ridicule is a poor test of its truth. As to Mr. Leslie, you or others have your own right to consider him as you may see fit, though I believe it will be a matter of very little moment to him."

Here shone forth brightly the fine traits in Clara's character. What she was well satisfied of, she had no hesitation in acknowledging; nor could she sit by quietly, and hear Charles Leslie stigmatized as ridiculous, even though it might have been dictated by jealousy. As usual with her, whenever her feelings were at all touched, her face as well as voice indicated what was passing in her mind. Mr. Hollis saw his mistake in a moment, and hastened to recover his ground by throwing her thoughts as rapidly as he could in another direction.

"You are right, Miss Sydenham, undoubtedly," said he; "ridicule is a poor test of truth, and we will dismiss such grave subjects as Christianity and Mr. Charles Leslie. But indeed," he continued, determined to give Charles a parting blow, "I can never look upon this solemn young gentleman, but my mind is carried back irresistibly to the times of the Roundheads in England, from whom he seems to have gathered up his notions as well upon government as religion. You will be at the Assembly this week, I hope?"

Clara smiled at this sally, which she well understood as arising from the mortification which Mr. Hollis had felt in his late dispute with Charles; but without replying to it, left it with himself to consider her, if he saw proper, as amused at his satire. She barely answered by saying, that she intended to be at the Assembly, and that so did Lucy and Agnes."

"It is a charming amusement in my opinion," said he. "The exhilaration of spirits produced by the music—the elegance of manners, we see, set off by all the embellishments of dress—the universal disposition evinced to please—present a scene which I greatly admire and approve of. I hardly know how a few hours could be passed more pleasantly."

Clara, while he was speaking, was contrasting his opinions on this subject, with those of Charles Leslie. Nothing could be more opposite. She readily detected the lightness of the reasons which had been advanced for his approbation of this kind of amusement, and well knew, that disappointment and mortification were as often experienced at it, as pleasure. Still Mr. Hollis's remarks were in unison with the feelings of youth, and with her love of novelty and excitement; and the cloud which had gathered upon her brow for one moment had passed away in another. Her manner instantly became that of the lady, ready to meet with ease and propriety, the attentions of any one entitled to the character of a gentleman, though she was still held in check by her judgment, in concurring fully with Mr. Hollis's high commendation.

"The Assemblies are very exciting certainly," she replied, "but upon the whole, not so much so, I think, as the Theatre. The scenes and sentiments in theatrical representations leave more lasting impressions, and if tender, or even terrific, as in deep tragedy, give more to think of afterwards, than all that passes at an Assembly."

"Perhaps not always, Miss Sydenham," said Mr. Hollis. "Many an offer of a gentleman's hand, (I do not mean for

a dance only,) has been made at the Assembly; and this would give a lady something to think of afterwards, more interesting to herself personally, than anything could be in the best of Shakspeare's plays."

"An offer of the hand, Mr. Hollis!" said Clara.

"Ah! Miss Sydenham," he replied, "that includes everything a gentleman has to offer. I hope you do not suppose it possible we could be so base as to mean less than this."

"I have had very few thoughts, sir, upon the subject."

"Pardon me," he replied, "but I had supposed the gallant captain had compelled from you already some thoughts upon this subject."

"Oh!" said Clara gayly, and laughing, "you have entirely mistaken the object of the captain's aspirations. Lucy must answer to that."

"I am happy to find myself mistaken, Miss Sydenham," replied Mr. Hollis.

He was here upon the point of pressing the same question as to Charles Leslie; but having been so lately compelled to quit that ground, he knew not how to seize upon it again. It might, too, have carried him too far. He was not yet prepared to offer himself, as he had received no evidence on Clara's part that she was ready to accept him if he did. Determined to make his approaches with all the skill he was master of, he contented himself for the present, with this indirect avowal of his sentiments, and then changing the subject, did his best to amuse Clara by descriptions of the society at Washington, particularly of some distinguished ladies from his own state, with whom he was intimate. At times, he contrived to throw in some well-

turned compliment to the fair girl; and yet would do so in a manner to which the most fastidious delicacy could not object. It would be absurd to say, that his address and management were all lost upon Clara. She saw that her company was sought after by a man of standing in what was called high life; she was sensible of his powers of conversation whenever he pleased to exert them, and flattered by the compliments which he had so dexterously applied to her vanity. The poison had been imbibed, and time was to show what consequences were to follow. At the moment it was plain, that her unbending first lover had lost ground to his dexterous and cunning rival; and such is still the course of things at Washington, where flattery still operates in this generation, as it did in the last, and will in the next—where compliments are substituted for sincerity—where the unsophisticated girl is taught all the arts of attracting admiration—and barter her once pure and still young heart, for wealth, and the gratification of her vanity, in a connection with a man known only for his political standing, or for his money.

The company was now retiring rapidly, and Clara, rising from her seat, wished Mr. Hollis a good night, with a smile, which few, upon whom such were directed, could meet with indifference. He returned it with much gallantry, and felt no small share of complacency at the success which he saw he had just obtained in his endeavors to please her.

Charles Leslie had reached, an hour before, his own solitary room, and was thinking intently upon his conversation with Clara, and deeply regretting to find the effect which the

company at Washington was making upon her character. A few weeks only had been sufficient to change, as he thought, the diffident, retiring girl, shrinking even from the gaze of admiration which her personal advantages rarely failed to excite, into the mere woman of fashion and of the world ; seeking universal attention, and often playing with the feelings which she endeavored to arouse. " True," he thought, " this might be an harsh judgment ; but still he feared it was just." Then again, he felt irritated that she could have thought so meanly of him, as to think that he would give up his principles to her wishes. " But go on," he said, giving vent to his feelings in words,—“ go on, and meet your fate, if you will have it so. Suffer under it, I must, I know—and suffer under it, I will, sooner than abandon a hope which even now is more precious than all this world can give. Beloved as lovely, may you yet escape the snares in your path, and know this hope as I do.”

CHAPTER IX.

Good morning, Captain Jackson," said Mr. Levis, as the captain took his seat at the breakfast-table. "But what is the matter with you? Your countenance betokens as much chagrin as if the Spaniards had routed your company."

The captain returned the salutation, and then told Mr. Levis, that "he was ordered to join his regiment, and that it greatly interfered with matters of much moment to him."

"Why not then," said Levis, "so inform the Secretary of War. Upon your specifying to him what these matters of moment are, it is very probable that he will give you such time as you may require to complete them." Levis made this remark with a twinkle of his gray eyes, and a twist of his mouth, perfectly intelligible to the gentlemen of the mess, with the most of whom he had been long intimate.

"These specifications, sir," replied the captain, "are always used on trials by courts-martial, and are useful enough, it is true, to the government, but sometimes very hard to be answered by the officer. Much as I wish to have a month at Washington, I cannot go into a specification of my reasons to the war department, in order to obtain that much time."

"Try it," said Levis, who suspected the captain's rea-

sons, and wished to make him speak out. "There is no telling what may be done by a fair representation showing matters of much moment to you. We are not at war yet, and if you see the secretary, you may succeed better than you fear."

"It is too late. My flank is turned already, and if I risk another moment, I may be defeated totally. I have an order now on my table to set off within a week."

"A week!" said Levis. "A great deal of business may be done in a week, captain! Can I help you? If so, let me know how."

"Thank you," replied the captain; "I believe I can work best by myself in the case, and do not need help from any quarter. I only want time to make opportunities, and twenty-four hours only afterwards. It is ill luck indeed, for I have had but one week's notice to be off, and this is the second day of that."

"You have only to work the harder then, for the time you have left," said Levis.

"That will be done in making my opportunities," replied he; "and the Assembly to-morrow night may be enough."

"Ah!" said Levis, "now I understand you. A lady on Capitol Hill holds the decision of this matter of moment to you, in her own hands. You are too sanguine still, I think. Both the ladies have many admirers; and I am disposed to believe, that a young friend of mine will be too much for you, to say nothing of one senator, and two members of the House to each; and if that does not dishearten you entirely, consider me also as in the field against you."

"You have mustered up a platoon," replied the captain;

"I would not care if it were a regiment. I have indeed heard of several competitors for the prize, and amongst them your young friend Leslie, whom I always see in close attendance."

"I should hardly have the courage, captain," said Charles Leslie, "to meet you in such a field. The members of Congress, however, whom Mr. Levis refers to, may be more than a match for you. Your rank, though high, is, in this place, very subordinate to theirs."

"I think, sir," said the captain briskly, "my rank equal to any man's."

"As a gentleman," replied Charles Leslie. "But ladies in Washington appear to consider those who have the power to make or unmake officers, as superior to the officers themselves. Competitors for their favor here, meet often upon a very unfair field, and may be foiled in a manner but little thought of."

"You are jealous, Leslie, I see," said the captain, "but I must cross your path. However, as there are two of them, you can attempt the one I may leave to you."

"Very kind that of you, captain," put in Levis—"very kind of you, to Leslie. I will try for the other."

"And welcome," gayly replied the captain, passing his eye over the slight figure of his new rival. "Pray meet me then at the Assembly to-morrow. A clear field and no favor."

"Agreed," said Levis. "I shall bring my best tactics to bear upon you, and have no doubt I shall rout you."

The captain answered only by a laugh of great self-complacency.

"Shall we go to war? Will additional regiments be raised?" inquired Mr. Levis.

"Certainly, as to your first question," replied the captain. "The difficulty still is, to say when. Our foreign relations are getting worse and worse, and after we have quarrelled a little longer, we shall leave off hard words, and come to hard blows. Additional regiments will, of course, be raised, and perhaps they may be authorized by Congress this session. I hope so, for I have reason to expect the command of one of them."

"It would be wise to do so, no doubt," said Levis. "We are in a very unprepared state for war, and shall be soundly drubbed, I doubt not, before the military spirit be roused up amongst us. A few frigates and a few regiments are but a small force with which to contend against Great Britain, busy as she may be kept by Bonaparte in Europe."

"No doubt," replied the captain, "we are unprepared in every way, but I do not believe that our greatest deficiency, as respects the army, is yet thought of. If the notion, that the old revolutionary officers will be the best men to lead our troops, be adopted, we shall suffer for it severely. Years have quenched the spirit of their youth. Men who, in the course of nature, have but a few years to live, are very chary of those few years. Additional honors very few of our revolutionary officers need: emoluments of pay, fewer still. Energy and enterprise will not be found. If we expect to fight battles on land with success against Great Britain, young men, who have honors

and high rank to gain, should be employed, and honors and high rank should be held forth as the reward."

"You are clearly right," said Levis, "but I doubt if your ideas will be acted upon. The old officers of the war of Independence have a strong hold on the affections of their countrymen and it will be impossible to begin except with them, if we are compelled to change soon afterwards for younger men."

"Yes, I suppose so," replied the captain. "The reasons I have stated, I believe to be sound, but that you have assigned will be acted upon, and it will be unfortunate, I am sure; for a great and unnecessary sacrifice of life may be induced by it. To give another reason. If the old officers retained anything of the energy and activity of youth, they would be so wedded to the old tactics, they would be no match for the men of the new system of making war, introduced since the commencement of the French Revolution. I have no doubt of the bravery of our people, but this only makes it the more necessary that they should be well commanded. From all the reflection I have given to this subject, I have come to this conclusion—that the general officers in one war, from which they have retired with rank and honors sufficient to satisfy them, are not fit to lead the army in the next war, in which they have no more to gain, but everything to lose."

"That is a new idea, captain," said Levis, "but really it seems reasonable. However, this is a subject which you military gentlemen ought to understand best; and your Secretary at War is, you know, an old officer of the war of Independence."

"And for that very reason," replied the captain, "will be the more disposed, if war breaks out while he is in office, to give up the army to these old men. And yet there is enough now before the world, to convince any thinking man, of what would be best upon this subject. The young French officers have proved infinitely superior to the old tacticians of the school of Frederic the Great."

"After all," said Levis, "I do not see how, in a war with Great Britain, we can have battles of any importance on land. And as to the sea, what can we do there with our half a dozen frigates?"

"Fight," replied the captain, "if but to show her that we are equal to her in bravery. Our naval officers have already given high proofs both of courage and professional skill. We cannot, it is true, contend in the war which is approaching, for the mastery of the seas, but we may convince Great Britain, that we will do it in the next. Can any of you tell me what Captain Decatur thinks would be the result of battles between single ships of equal force, American and British?"

"I can answer your question, captain," said Charles Leslie. "He told me very lately that we should beat them. It would be a hard fight, he said, but was confident that we should get the victory."

"His opinion," said Levis, "goes a great way with me, and if he engages an enemy of equal force, I shall be greatly mistaken if he does not bring her into port, unless, indeed, he sinks her. His acknowledged bravery and coolness authorize this expectation. A few successful battles at sea, and a new era for maritime supremacy begins.

Great Britain had better be just, and not force us into becoming a great naval power. Her fate may depend upon this very question."

"Justice, with her," said Mr. Campbell, another gentleman of the mess, "is not to be named. She can exist by her maritime superiority only—through it she pursues doggedly her commercial monopoly—and by it, will endeavor to extend her influence over the globe, to the last moment she can."

"And by it, may again and again attempt to destroy our Union," said the captain, rising from the table. "You will meet me then at Philippi, Mr. Levis?" he asked, turning to that gentleman.

"Be sure of it; and prove there your evil genius. So soon as you see me in the room, consider yourself as defeated as certainly as Brutus was by Antony."

A laugh and waive of the hand was all the answer the captain gave, as the door closed upon his fine figure.

"You are a handsome fellow, that is certain," said Levis, and not deficient in sense and information. Pity that your towering vanity should spoil your fair proportions. Will he succeed, Leslie?"

"How can he,—when you are his rival for one of the ladies, and Mr. Campbell for the other?"

CHAPTER X.

THE Assemblies at this time were held in the old theatre, which was fitted up on these occasions into rooms for dancing and supper, with a third appropriated to the use of the ladies. The first Assembly for the season had been anxiously expected by the three girls, who were very desirous of seeing all together, the beauty and fashion which then filled the city.

"Indeed, Agnes," said Clara, as they were dressing, "I hope I shall commit no *village gaucherie* to-night, and be as awkward as if this were the first dance I ever was at in my life."

"I have the same tremors myself, sister," replied Agnes. "I hope Charles may be there. If I had him for my partner in the first dance, I think that my embarrassment would be lessened, and I could do well enough afterwards."

"You must do without him, Agnes," said Clara. "Go, he will not, though I pressed him to oblige us with his company. But, pray do not bring him up before me just now, when I mean to be as gay as I can; for the moment you do, his words sound in my ears, and bring thoughts not suitable, certainly, for the ball-room."

When Mr. Sydenham reached the ball-room with his daughters, Clara felt agitated in finding herself in the midst

of so large and brilliant an assembly ; but advancing, with her arm in her father's on one side, while Agnes held the other, they moved forward to the head of the room, where a group of their friends were standing in conversation. Mrs. Marchmont received them with one of her sweetest smiles ; and introducing the secretary of the French Legation, he solicited the honor of Clara's hand for the next dance ; and then leaving her for a moment, brought up one of the attaches of the embassy, who engaged Agnes also. The set was soon formed. The music was excellent, and the scene altogether so exhilarating, that the girls soon lost their timidity, and felt entirely at their ease. Clara observed that Captain Jackson had Lucy for his partner, in the set next to hers, while, at a little distance, she saw Mr. O'Connor in conversation with Levis. In the movements of the dance, she came near enough to make some lively remark to him, but before he could reply, the figure had carried her beyond hearing.

"And a fine young lady you are, sure," said O'Connor, turning to Levis,—“and a pity it is, and it is myself too that says it, that I was not born some twenty-five years later.”

“And what if you had been ?” replied Levis. “What success could you have expected against the handsome captain, who declares himself desperately smitten with her, and determined to win her ; and of which he says he has no doubt ?”

“I was only after making a sort of a supposition, Misther Levis,” said his friend, “and every now and then such will be coming into my head ; and then again, when they see

how white it is getting, they go out as fast as they came in, as if they were ashamed to be caught there. But as to the captain, he has no chance, or I know nothing of Miss Clara Sydenham. Very lively she is, sure; but her delicacy, dignity of manners, and sound sense, forbid the idea of her ever giving her affections for a fine figure like his, or for rank, even were it as high as that of a general. He has great boldness to approach her, with that freezing dignity which she assumes the moment it becomes necessary."

"And yet he will venture it, be sure," replied Levis. "I told him jestingly, that I would meet him here, as Brutus' evil genius threatened to meet him at Philippi; and his reply and manner alike convinced me, that he will offer himself, and is sure of succeeding. It is a pity that his vanity is so immeasurable, for he is not deficient in talents, and stands well in the army."

"He is all that you represent him to be," said Mr. O'Connor, "and this I can say from an acquaintance with him of some standing. But he is here upon ground of which he knows nothing, and may meet a repulse in a way which he does not expect, if he thinks to get Miss Sydenham for the asking. I will wager my pay for the session upon that."

"I am not disposed to take your offer," replied Levis; "but see, the dance is over, and the gentlemen are leading their partners to seats. Let us be lookers-on in Verona for awhile."

The young ladies had rejoined their company attended by their partners, who then went off together to order refreshments. This movement gave the captain, upon their

return, an opportunity of getting a seat next to Clara, and of asking her to dance the next cotillion with him. Though by no means pleased with the request, Clara saw that she could not refuse consistently with good manners, or the rules of the ball-room, and assented. It was about this time that the waltz, since so fashionable, was introduced into the amusements of our country, but was so repelled by the then delicacy of our females, that it had not assumed the wanton movements upon which every eye is now fixed with pleasure as well as admiration. The cotillion which the band was playing, was danced to a figure in which the waltz occasionally made a part, and no liberty was permitted the gentleman, but that of laying his hand on his partner's shoulder, as they turned round. When this was to be done, the captain placed his on Clara's. "No, sir, no!" she exclaimed, shrinking from him, and then walking the circle as that part of the figure required for the waltz. Her partner, feeling the repulse keenly, kept by her side, and the dance soon afterwards ended.

The two lookers-on in Verona had been in observation.

"And did you see that, Mither Levis?" said O'Connor. "Sure too, it was just what I was looking for, and well done it was. The captain will be defeated."

"I think so too," replied his friend; "and I am highly gratified at seeing so undisguised and prompt a repulse of liberties as indelicate as they are ungraceful." Approaching the set before it broke up, and watching his opportunity, he whispered to the captain that he had observed what had just taken place, adding, that "his evil genius had the mastery that night." But the captain had neither time nor in-

clination to reply just then. The dance was not over, and his mortification was too great to give it the expression he wished. But his thoughts were instantly turned in the direction of Lucy, and he determined to change his object, and transfer his operations to her. When the dance was over, and he had led Clara to a seat, he went off in another direction, with the intention to find or make an opportunity for his proposals to Lucy, as confident as ever of succeeding with her, as he had been of succeeding with Clara.

Soon after he had gone, one of the managers came up to Agnes, and asked her to dance with a gentleman from New York, who had requested him to solicit the honor of her hand. She immediately assented, and the manager soon brought up the gentleman, and introduced him as Mr. Gambroon. As soon as they took their places, Captain Decatur, who had been conversing with Clara, Lucy, and Agnes, left the two former, and followed Agnes, continuing his conversation with her. At every interval of the dance, as the figure required, the captain immediately touched her arm to draw her attention, and renewed the conversation. When the dance was over he went with her to her seat. Her partner had gone to the manager, who soon re-appeared, making the same request to Lucy, on behalf of Mr. Gambroon, that he had made to Agnes. As soon as Lucy rose to go to the set, the captain rose also, and acted over again with her the part he had just been performing with Agnes. When the dance was over, and the young ladies were again together—"Do you know," said he, "who it is you have been dancing with? He is a

shopkeeper's clerk in New York, and neither by his manners nor associations has any title to the pretensions he is assuming here. Knowing this, I took the liberty to engage your attention, that he might see he was known, and have no ground to say, that you were both acquaintances of his."

"So he is, most certainly," said Lucy, laughing; "I now remember buying a dress from him in Broadway, and I thought I had seen him somewhere. Thank you, captain, for your interference; but indeed," she continued, "it is to be wished, that some mode could be adopted by which these over-democratic admissions to the ball-room might be prevented." Agnes added her acknowledgments to Lucy's for the gentlemanly conduct which tended to lessen so much the mortification which the manager, though unconsciously, had produced.

Their attention was now drawn to a movement by another group of ladies advancing to their side of the room. Amongst them was one of high standing in society, of the olden times, and yet tenaciously adhering to the mode of dress and manners which had so strikingly characterized the females of a generation, one of which was now rarely to be seen in places of fashionable amusement. Her stiff brocade, high-heeled shoes, tight stays, as they were then called, arms bared to above the elbow, and head dress as antique in shape as costly in material, gave instant evidence, that a belle of the last century had made her appearance amongst the belles of the present. As she came up to where the three young ladies and Captain Decatur, with Mr. Hollis, who had now joined them, were in conversation, the gentleman, whose arm the fine old lady held,

stopped to introduce to her an acquaintance of his, who acknowledged the honor by a low bow. The lady turned to him, and crossing her arms, returned one of those slow, modest, and graceful courtesies which had been in fashion half a century before. "Was not that pretty," said the captain to Clara. "Can you equal it, do you think?"

"Perhaps not," she replied. "It was pretty indeed; easy, natural, and graceful. I hardly think that our manners nowadays can compare advantageously with those of our mothers; for the object now seems to be, to substitute something artificial for what is ease and nature."

"Will you let the gentlemen have anything to think upon that subject, Miss Sydenham?" said Mr. Hollis.

"By all means."

"I think then," said he, fixing his look intently upon Clara, "that the daughters greatly surpass the mothers in grace of manners, as well as in cultivated understandings. We have in the Old Dominion yet, wherewith to make the comparison."

"You had permission to think, Mr. Hollis, not to speak," said Lucy. "You gentlemen of Congress bring the privileges of the House with you into the ball-room."

"Excuse him this time, Miss Marchmont," said Mr. Campbell, who had joined them just at that moment, "Excuse him this time for the cause."

"I do not know that I shall," replied Lucy, who had interfered to cover the embarrassment which she saw Mr. Hollis's attentions were causing to Clara. "A compliment to the daughter at the expense of the mother, is no compliment at all."

"I do not admire compliments, for my part," said Mr. Campbell, "as they are usually applied. The highest compliment I could pay to a lady, would be in telling her of the failings in her character ; for in doing so, I should believe that her heart and understanding would cause her to see those failings, and correct them."

Lucy gave her lover one of her sweetest smiles. Clara cast down her eyes. Mr. Campbell's words had struck her deeply even in the ball-room,—and Charles Leslie was in her thoughts. But their attention was suddenly called to a scene of confusion which had just opened in another part of the room. Two sets were engaged in a cotillion, and a young man who belonged to one of them, and whose dancing was much admired, was so elated at his own performance, that his movements became extravagant ; his heels got entangled in his partner's dress, and after violent efforts to clear himself, they both fell to the floor together. The lady was assisted to her feet, her dress torn almost from her : the gentleman in a plight not much better. They both had to retire immediately, while the spectators could with difficulty smother the laugh which the *faux pas* had excited. "What is the matter, O'Connor?" asked Levis, as they encountered at the other end of the room.

"Sure," said O'Connor, "and it is nothing else but that a lady has fallen in the ball-room ; and is that any great wonder at all, at all, Misther Levis?"

"I think not," said his friend, dryly, already out of humor with the waltz. "I shall not be surprised to hear of other falls. But I have seen enough : good night ; I am going."

O'Connor returned his farewell, telling him that he

should not be long there himself, but should go first to the supper-table, to which the company would be summoned as soon as the cotillion was ended. This, however, took place in a few moments, and from a laughable circumstance indeed. An officer of the marine corps, as well known for his intelligence and bravery, as for his high bearing as a gentleman, was in one of the sets which were then on the floor. He was in uniform, and one of the hooks which confined the breast of his coat, had got loose from the eye on the other side. In turning his partner, the hook most unfortunately caught her wig. He could have extricated it in a single moment, had the lady retained her presence of mind and stood still ; but instead of that, she clapped her hand upon the wig, held everything tight, and made for the dressing-room as fast as she could, pulling the captain with her. Thus the good manners of the company were again in requisition upon an occasion which, if not so mortifying as a fall, was vastly more trying to the laughing propensities of those who were near enough to see the manner of the exeunt.

Supper was announced. The ladies had rejoined their party, and all moved onwards. They were about taking their seats, when the arrival of another party with the lady of the Secretary of State, stopped them for a moment, to interchange the civilities which their first meeting for the evening rendered necessary. When they were all fixed, Clara, with much pleasure, found herself seated next to Mrs. Madison. She had already been several times in her company at different places, and at her house, and won by her elegant manners, and amiable deportment, felt all

the mingled emotions of respect and affection, which this fine woman never failed to make upon the young and unsuspecting heart. And even to this day, the recollection of scenes long past, and of her gentle and affectionate attentions, still call forth an acknowledgment of what is due to the dignity of her character, as to the surpassing ease and elegance of her manners.

The appearance of the company, when seated, was splendid. Dress, ornaments, smiles, animation,—hopes, it may be, gave new charms to what of themselves were sufficient to enslave all Congress. It was a sight to rivet the attention, as the eye wandered from one to another of more than one hundred ladies, none of a plain appearance, and many of surpassing grace and loveliness.

The dancing had been resumed after supper, and the young ladies had been engaged in two sets, when Mr. Sydenham came up to his daughters, and telling them that a violent snow-storm was raging without, bid them to get ready to go home, and to be careful to wrap themselves up well in the dressing-room, while he went out to order up his carriage. Upon reaching the dressing-room, the servant informed Clara that Miss Somerville had, by mistake, taken her cloak instead of her own, and Clara was thus compelled to submit to the temporary exchange. She found, however, that it was every way equal to her own, and exactly resembled Lucy's, both in the fabric and fashion. Agnes was ready, and Clara wrapping herself up, and drawing the hood well over her head, they went towards the door with the rest of the party, determined to crowd all the ladies into Mr. Sydenham's or Mr. Marchmont's carriage, as

either might be first able to draw up, and leave the other for the gentlemen to follow them when they could. But the crowd of carriages of every kind was so great, that neither Mr. Sydenham's nor Mr. Marchmont's had been able to get to the door. To walk to them was out of the question, for the snow was now six inches deep. As they thus stood, Clara sheltered herself behind a pillar from the keen wind which was pouring in. During these movements, the party had been closely watched by a gentleman, who had now made his way to where Clara was standing. She heard herself suddenly addressed in the most impassioned manner. "Cruel girl!" said the speaker; "the storm is kinder than thou art, for it has prevented your departure, and given me an opportunity of suing for that hand, without which life has no value. Lucy—adored Lucy! tell me that I may hope." It was the captain, who, true to his purpose, had followed the party; but misled by the resemblance of Clara's cloak to Lucy's, and not able to see well the features of either, had most unluckily addressed the wrong person. Clara, recognizing his voice, and astonished and alarmed at such an unexpected address, immediately turned towards Mrs. Marchmont and her party, and as she did so, a loud voice from the street announced Mr. Sydenham's carriage, and then Mr. Marchmont's. Mr. Sydenham appeared at the door, and immediately entered his carriage, and placed his daughters on each side of him. Drawing them close to him, and throwing his cloak around them, to shield them still better from the severity of the weather, "I hope, my dear girls," he said, "that you will not suffer from this night's dissipation."

Clara was silent for a moment, and then threw her arms about her father. "Now I am with you, dear papa," she said, "I can laugh again ; but I have just been frightened and agitated excessively. As we all stood in the lobby, expecting every moment to see you, and to learn that the carriage was at the door, a gentleman who had followed us, came close to me, and began a passionate address to me as if I were Lucy, being misled, I suppose, by the resemblance of our cloaks. I immediately drew my hood still closer about my face, so that he could not know me, and had turned to get near to Mrs. Marchmont, when you came up. The person was Captain Jackson."

"He is intrusive, my dear," said Mr. Sydenham, "and presumptuous in his manners and expectations: If he directs his attentions to you, you must check them ; and if that will not do, I shall interfere myself."

"I can hardly expect, papa," replied Clara, "that he will trouble me, as his declaration to-night was certainly intended for Lucy. But if I am mistaken, I will attend faithfully to your directions."

The carriage had now reached Vanderhorn's. The girls ran up to their room, and in a few minutes Mrs. Marchmont and Lucy came in also. As soon as they were seated around the fire, Clara, in a fit of laughter almost uncontrollable, related what had just passed, concluding her recital with the captain's words, "Lucy—adored Lucy—may I hope?"

Mrs. Marchmont, turning to Lucy, asked her "what all this meant. Surely, my child, you have not been giving Captain Jackson encouragement to address you?"

"Indeed I have not, my dear mamma," replied Lucy.

‘Clara’s account of what has just taken place, is as unexpected to me as anything could be.’ Here a fit of laughter at the captain’s unlucky mistake seized upon her, and was soon taken up by all present. “But never mind,” she said, “these epaulettes are not easily driven from the field, but rally, and try it in another place. Probably he will be here to-morrow, and as I shall give no chance for hope, I think it most probable that he will make his next offer to Clara. *Nous verrons*; so pray, Clara, stop laughing. Here is a large tray which Ann has just brought up, with something upon it which I would not exchange for the captain.”

“Lucy—adored Lucy—may I hope?” repeated Clara.

“Do pray stop, or I shall never finish my cup of tea,” said Lucy, putting it down, and laughing again violently. “After all,” said she, “this is a laughable finale to an evening which I have passed pleasantly, let it have been to others as it may.”

Mrs. Marchmont had now retired to her own room, and the three girls also prepared for sleep, which soon fell upon them, thoughtless as ignorant of what futurity might have in reserve for them all,—and as innocent and guileless as youth and loveliness, in its time of witchery and power, could be.

CHAPTER XI.

"TRULY," said Mr. Sydenham, the evening after the Assembly, "truly this is an uncomfortable night ; and I hope you will all remain at home, and we will have a family party. The girls will give music to those who like it, and the rest of us will have a game at loo."

The gentlemen expressed their acquiescence in the proposal : the table was drawn out, the cards thrown upon it, and the party arranged themselves around it, Mr. O'Connor handing Mrs. Stanley very gallantly to the seat nearest to the fire. Mrs. Marchmont, who never played, drew out a purse which she was netting. Lucy seated herself at a table, to examine some beautiful prints which her father had just purchased. Agnes kept close to Mrs. Marchmont ; and Clara sauntered carelessly about the room for a while, and then seated herself at the piano, running her fingers over the keys. Mr. O'Connor, who was dealing out the cards, turned round his fine animated face, and taking a survey of the large, well-lighted apartment, and bright fire burning in the grate, "And sure now," said he, "and it is myself that tells it, we are all comfortably fixed ;—good company, bright lights and brighter eyes, and a warm fire, while the rough northwester rattles against the windows in vain, for admittance. And, Miss Clara, will you please give us some music into the bargain ?"

"Anything you please, Mr. O'Connor," replied Clara.

"Then play 'Erin go Bragh,' while I cheat Mrs. Stanley out of her money."

"'Erin go Bragh,' Mr. O'Connor, and welcome," replied Clara, laughing, "but no cheating of the ladies," her fingers running rapidly over the keys in a beautiful symphony. She then played and sang the song so sweet in Irish ears, with great taste and feeling, Mr. O'Connor accompanying her at times with his deep, clear bass. Mr. Campbell then came in, and was soon seated alongside of Lucy. A little while afterwards, the servant announced Captain Jackson; who entered with one of his most graceful bows, his fine figure showing to great advantage in his military dress, and his handsome face flushed with his walk.

"Ah! captain," exclaimed Mr. O'Connor, shaking hands with him as he approached to the card-table, "and we are very glad to see you. You had a very fine wind from the Seven Buildings, sure, or you could not have reached here so soon after supper."

The captain replied, that he had dined that day with the Secretary at War; had just left the table, and had called to take leave, as he should set off for the South in the morning. Mr. O'Connor expressed surprise, and Mrs. Stanley regret; saying at the same time, that "he had better ask for a few days' delay, as she hardly thought he had yet completed all his business at Washington." The captain well understood the lady, though no one else did; but told her that "a military order was not to be evaded, however painful it might be to an officer's feelings, or injurious to his affairs," softening his voice as he spoke, and casting a glance

at Lucy. From her, however, he met none in return. She had acknowledged his presence by a slight bow, when he entered the room, and had again given her attention entirely to Mr. Campbell. A shade of disappointment passed over his fine features, and was quickly succeeded by angry feelings arising from mortified vanity. He stood in a studied attitude, showing his fine person to great advantage, leaning on Mrs. Stanley's chair, as if he were observing the players, but far different thoughts engrossed him. He had been playing a deep game, and now found himself in a position in which it was to be feared that he would lose it. He had unequivocally solicited Lucy's hand, but the night before, and now found her wholly engrossed by another, who he knew was his rival, and evidently having no intention of giving him an opportunity to renew his suit. This very rival too, had heard his boasts of his confidence of success with both of the ladies. What course was now to be taken, was the question. An engagement with one of them must be made, that his interests might be left safely with her father during his absence; otherwise, all his expectations of preferment, in which he had been confirmed by Mrs. Stanley's approbation of his plan, were worthless. His pride, too, was aroused. "Must I go South," thought he, "and leave my name to be the scoff of Levis, Campbell and Leslie? Miss Sydenham is every way equal to Miss Marchmont, and I will now try what a *coup de main* can do to secure her. If I succeed, I will steal one day from the War Department to make all safe."

At this moment a loud laugh arose at the card-table. Mr. O'Connor had just won a large pool from Mrs. Stanley,

who, rising from the table, declared that she was bankrupt, and did not play that night with her usual judgment and success. "Thank you, Miss Clara," cried out Mr. O'Connor, "your music has charmed away Mrs. Stanley's wits, and given me an opportunity of winning from her ten bales of cotton. Come here, captain, and take her place, and do your best to win them back. But what is the matter with you? Sure, now that I have time to look at you, you have much the appearance of a man going upon a forlorn-hope."

"Thank you," said the captain, rallying his thoughts and laughing, "you gentlemen of Congress have not yet passed the army appropriation bill, and I am not so able to stand losses as well as Mrs. Stanley. The power that charmed away her wits, as you say, may perhaps steal away my melancholy." He then moved across the room, and took a chair near Clara, who was still seated at the piano, though not playing on it.

"You have been very merry at the card-table, Captain Jackson," said she. "Mr. O'Connor's wit and fine manners sometimes draw me there myself."

"Then Mr. O'Connor is to be envied, Miss Sydenham."

"Yes," she replied, "the ceaseless sunshine of his mind diffuses an exhilarating influence on all around him, and keeps us in good humor with ourselves, and everybody else."

"But is he not shining," said the captain, "with a borrowed light, reflected by the bright rays of wit and beauty which are around him?"

"Ah! captain," replied Clara, "I shall begin to think

that you really envy Mr. O'Connor his powers of attraction."

"Not his powers of attraction, Miss Sydenham, but his position near the star of my destiny. I am going off to the South, with the painful consciousness that each day drags me further from all that can give value to existence; but fortune has favored me with an opportunity of pouring out the anguish of my heart to you, and to plead your sympathy."

Clara turned an arch look towards Mrs. Marchmont. "Now," thought she, "I am to be made a confidant of, just as much as he may see fit to reveal of his last night's offer."

"Yes,—certainly, captain," she said, "you shall have my sympathy, if the case deserve it; but first let me know something about it, and I then can better understand to what extent it might be given. How long have you been in love with this fair lady?"

"Since the first hour we met."

"Ah! Captain Jackson," replied Clara, "that will never do. Love at first sight is nothing but an *ignis fatuus*, which the first breath of reason dissipates. You will have to bear the absence of a year at least, to test your constancy, before you can expect a kind look or a smile."

The captain was perplexed by the sportive and arch manner in which his intended addresses were received. Common sensibilities, had he possessed them, would have shown him that he could have no interest in the fair girl, who could answer him thus gayly at the moment she was expecting his offer: but led onwards by his selfishness and vanity, he now plunged into the gulf before him.

"Oh! say not so, loveliest of women!" he exclaimed, seizing her hand and holding it firmly, in spite of her efforts. "Oh! say not so! sport not with the feelings of a heart that adores you!"

Clara was struck dumb for one moment, but recovering herself, "This to me! to me!" cried the offended girl, struggling violently to extricate her hand—her face flushed, and her form elevated to its utmost height.

"Yes! to you," cried the captain; "for who else has such power to charm? and how can you ask it, when your past manner towards me has evinced that a kindred sympathy of soul has existed between us, from the first hour we met."

Clara stood motionless, and unable to utter a word, from the presumption and vanity of her admirer, in thus attributing to her feelings towards him, to which she had ever been an utter stranger; but her sense of propriety and her natural dignity soon resumed their places, from which they had been violently jostled for a moment. The captain still continued his passionate professions of his own, and expressions of her preference for him; and then wound up the whole, by asking her permission to speak to Mr. Sydenham for his approbation.

Clara had now determined upon her course. "There is no occasion for that, Captain Jackson," said the indignant girl, releasing her hand, at length, by a sudden effort, "there is no occasion for that. My father was speaking to me about you last night, and I will now speak to him myself." Advancing to the table where Mr. Sydenham was still engaged with the party at loo,—standing close to

him, and looking at him intently, "What, my dear papa," said she, "would you think of a son-in-law? I have just had an offer, and am come to know what you will say to the gentleman."

Mr. Sydenham turning towards her, instantly discovered Clara's intention, that the captain should receive such a repulse as the insult which his vanity and presumption had given, deserved. "Bring him forward—bring him forward," he cried; "let me have a look at him." The whole party had now thrown down their cards at the scene before them. But the captain now saw his error. Overwhelmed with confusion at the turn which Clara had so unexpectedly given to the affair,—observing the indignation which was plainly marked upon her countenance, and which appeared to be rapidly rising to her father's also, he could stand it no longer. He rose from his chair—stammered out something about misapprehension—no offence intended—was going off in the morning—till getting near the door, out he went. "Bring him back—bring him back," cried Mr. O'Connor, going to the passage. "He has beat a retreat, sure," said he, returning; "and it is the best thing he could have done." A burst of laughter followed from all but Clara, who was still too angry to join in it.

She took her seat at the table with Lucy and Mr. Campbell, but this was no relief to her. Lucy's merriment was unabated. In one of its intervals, Mr. Campbell inquired of her what it was that amused her so much more than others in the scene which had just been exhibited. Lucy then told him what had occurred the night before at the Assembly, and her prediction, that Clara herself would re-

ceive from the captain, this very night, the offer which he had made herself the night before. This set off Mr. Campbell and Lucy once more, and Clara's natural buoyancy of spirits having regained its ascendancy, she could not help joining them. "And what new thing is it?" said Mr. O'Connor, calling to them, "that you have found out? Send it here to this table, that we may know if we are to join you."

Mr. Campbell related the affair of the night before, and another burst of laughter broke forth from all but Mr. O'Connor. He started to his feet. "In my soul," said he, "I am ashamed that he has a drop of Irish blood left in him, and has been guilty of such conduct. But that he has received a lesson which I think will be of use to him, and is going away in the morning, I would do him the favor to give him another myself."

To the general merriment which had been operating through the company, there were two exceptions. Mrs. Stanley was violently offended at the indignity with which she thought the captain was treated. She left the room soon after he did, and the next morning left Vanderhorn's. The other was Hollis, who sat observing everything, to appearance, very philosophically, but in reality with deep interest. His jealousy had been aroused by both the captain and Charles Leslie, and though his penetration soon enabled him to discover, that he had the most to fear from the latter, he was still not without apprehensions from the former. The captain's dismissal in so public a manner had removed all fear on his account, and his spirits rose accordingly. Advancing with his usual caution to his object of securing Clara's affections for himself, he now sought an

opportunity of conversing with her. He began his remarks with admirable dexterity, as to the captain's vanity and presumption, which he attributed to his handsome face and military education, and then complimented her upon the promptness and the mode in which he had been rejected. "And may such," he added, "be the fate of all who offer you a homage which is not due, as well to your understanding as to your charms."

This was well expressed, and for one moment Clara felt it. But how strange is our nature! The very homage which it was plain her new admirer wished her to believe that he himself was then offering, was the very kind which Charles Leslie had always paid to her; for she knew and felt that when he told her of her failings, of which she never heard a word from Hollis, Charles appealed both to her understanding and heart, to perceive and to correct them. Mr. Hollis's arrow fell at her feet, harmless. He had unwittingly brought up before her remembrances of his rival, which the dissipation of Washington had not yet effaced.

The night was now far advanced, and the company retired from the drawing-room.

"Where is Captain Jackson, Harry?" said Mr. Levis to the servant in waiting, the next morning. "You had better step up to his room and call him."

"Captain Jackson went away in the stage, last night, sir," replied the servant.

"Went away last night!" said Mr. Levis, in surprise.

"Yes, sir," repeated Harry.

"It is even so," said Mr. Campbell. "I was at Vanderhorn's last night when he came to take leave, and announ-

ced that he was ordered back to the South, and should set off immediately."

"Ah! indeed," said Mr. Levis, "I wish I had been there to have seen him make his last bow, and have witnessed the abrupt termination of his hopes."

"Abrupt it was," said Campbell, who found it impossible to repress a laugh at the recollection of the scene of the last night.

"Well then, let us hear how it was," said Mr. Levis. "I see from your manner, that there was something laughable; though I cannot tell how a leave-taking, such as I should suppose the captain had to go through, could have anything ludicrous in it. Do you mean to say, that either of the ladies, or both of them shed tears, or gave him something for a remembrance during his absence?"

Campbell again broke out into a laugh. "No tears from either, Mr. Levis, certainly," said he, "but most unbounded laughter; and that too from the token of remembrance which one of the ladies gave to the captain, and which, I am sure, he carries about him this morning."

"You young rogue," replied Mr. Levis, "you only increase my curiosity without gratifying it. Begin at the beginning, and go through the whole scene."

"Excuse me," said Campbell, "I should not be able to do justice to it. You must apply to Mr. O'Connor."

"Well," said Levis, rising from breakfast, "there is something in it laughable enough, I see, and I will find it out yet."

The gentlemen left the room one by one, till there were none left but Mr. Campbell and Charles Leslie. "I did not

think it proper, Leslie," said Campbell, turning to him, "to relate before all at the breakfast-table what took place at Vanderhorn's ; but the footing upon which you stand with Mr. Sydenham's family well justifies me in giving you an account of it." He then related the whole affair, concluding with expressions of admiration and respect for Clara, from the manner in which she had borne herself through it.

"It is like her," said Charles ; "she has an intuitive perception of propriety, and a dignity of mind which perceives and checks, in a moment, the slightest attempt of vanity and presumption in our sex. She may be a most superior woman in time, if she escape the infection of this dissipated city, and get home as guileless as she came. It is to me a most thoughtless thing in parents to expose artless, beautiful young girls, to the polluted air which they must often breathe here."

"It is so," replied his friend, "and will continue to be so. The seat of the General Government of our rising nation will become more and more attractive every year ; and will bring together at every session crowds of ladies who will come to see, and to be seen, to admire and to be admired. But say, will you go to Vanderhorn's this evening ? You are always a welcome visitor there, I know."

"I am not so sure of that."

"But I am," rejoined Campbell. "Consent to go. I will introduce you to Miss Sydenham," he added, smiling ; "with Miss Marchmont you are acquainted, I believe."

"With the latter, Campbell, not quite so well as I believe you are. But I see you are taking me with you to engage Miss Sydenham in conversation, while you pair off with

Miss Marchmont. But no matter," Charles added, smiling in his turn, "I will go with you."

The evening accordingly found them at Vanderhorn's. Upon entering the drawing-room, they found that Clara and Lucy were its only occupants. As the young men advanced towards the fireplace, Campbell, with great gravity, introduced Charles to Clara; and telling her that he was a particular friend of his, but very bashful, begged her to entertain him to the best of her ability, while he would beseech Miss Marchmont to entertain himself. He then led Lucy to the opposite part of the room, out of hearing of Charles and Clara, who were seated near to each other.

"Campbell is in high spirits to-night," said Charles, "and it needs no prophet to tell the cause; and glad I am of it. He has great worth, and has found great worth to match it. You have begun the work of dismissal, I find, Clara," he continued, "from what Campbell has been telling me. How many are to meet the same fate?"

"As many as may deserve it, Charles," she replied.

"That is as well said, as the other was well done. But pray don't abuse your power when you are using it. A gentleman, in offering himself to a lady, pays her the greatest compliment he can; and if rejected, it should be done so as to spare his feelings as much as possible."

"But suppose he has no feelings?" inquired Clara.

"Such a case seems to be impossible," replied Charles. "But what a scene of dissipation Washington is," he added, turning the conversation. "Heaven grant that you may get out of it, as artless as you came into it! I often, very often, think of your position, and hear much of the admi-

ration you excite, of the homage you receive, and wonder what will be the issue of it all."

"You have heard, then, more than was true. But were it so, nothing but good, I hope."

"I hope so," Charles replied, "as ardently as you do, perhaps more so; but I well know, that the society at Washington will severely test the principles of all who mix in it. Your own good judgment may point out your course, and your heart—pardon me this once that I use the word—your heart will prompt you to act up to it. Will it ever be, that I shall see you all I had once dared to hope?"

Charles Leslie, when in conversation with Clara, and endeavoring to arouse the better feelings, which he thought she still possessed, threw into his voice and manner, a softness and interest which made his words thrill through her. She saw his attachment, and she saw, too, the conflict of his mind, and emotions much like his own were immediately excited in her own sensitive bosom.

"Charles, Charles! how can you take pleasure in giving me pain by"—

"Give you pain!" he replied, interrupting her—"to do so, is the last thing on earth I would be guilty of intentionally. Rough I may be—perhaps, at times, intrusive,—but never—never has there been a moment, that I have felt aught but the deepest solicitude, for all that concerned your character and happiness."

Clara was deeply affected by the low, impassioned tone, and expressions of her first lover, and turned upon him a look of confidence and respect. There is no telling to

what a longer conference might have led ; perhaps a full understanding might have taken place, and years of separation never have been known ;—but just then a crowd of company came in, and the young ladies rose to receive them.

Mr. Hollis had entered the room at the same time, and his eye instantly caught the position of the two couples, which, the one out of the hearing of the other, had been so closely engaged. With Mr. Campbell and Lucy, he did not concern himself ; but he remarked, that both Charles Leslie's and Clara's countenances betrayed their agitation. But the pride of the Virginian now aroused, as well as his feelings interested, he was the more determined than ever to push his attentions, and secure his conquest of Clara, and thus complete his triumph over one whom he haughtily considered his inferior. The victory, he saw plainly, was still contested by his adversary, but this only urged him to more strenuous exertions.

CHAPTER XII.

As it is in the present, so it was in the last generation. When the Assemblies began, they were followed up by party after party, given by the high officers of the Government, and by gentlemen of the city whose means were adequate to those expensive entertainments. Sometimes a sleighing-party would be made for Bladensburg or Alexandria; and one or two persons may yet remember, how, in one of them, some of the company at Vanderhorn's were thrown out, and mixed up together in the snow. Dissipation and excitement, in every mode which the ten-miles square could afford, then as now, bore everything before it like a storm; and there was no telling what wrecks would be seen after it had passed over.

At all these parties, Mr. Hollis was a constant attendant upon Clara. His attentions were plain and decided, and if not pointedly encouraged, were not pointedly repulsed. With a vanity, of which most men have a share, he thought that he might now consider himself as standing upon good ground in offering himself, and he determined to do so. Charles Leslie had, for some time past, kept himself in the background. After his conversation with Clara, in which they had been interrupted by the entrance of company, he found that she still pursued the same career of dissipation,

with unabated ardor. He knew, likewise, that Hollis was incessant in his attentions, and he thought that he had seen twice, when he was at Vanderhorn's, that he was encouraged by Clara. He now left the field to his rival. Intrenched in his own stronghold, he determined to await the issue of the trial which he saw plainly that she would have to sustain; and though it was with deep apprehension of the result, still he was anxious for the decision. Clara, on her part, expected Mr. Hollis's offer—some time or other,—indefinitely, before the session closed;—and though at times pleased with his attentions, had not yet made his expected offer, a subject upon which she had formed a final determination. To a woman of sense and honor, who knows that a connection for life is almost the most important matter which she can ever be called upon to decide, deep reflection, and examination of her own heart, are sure to follow; and if any apprehension exists as to the principles of her suitor, or doubts as to the state of her own affections towards another, the moment of decision is put off, until it can be no longer avoided.

In this state was Clara, when one morning, soon after breakfast, Mr. Hollis found himself alone with her in the drawing-room, and seizing the opportunity, and with somewhat of Virginian haughtiness, made his proposals, and concluded with asking her permission to speak to her father. But Clara, after all that she had thought upon the subject, was not ready with a definite answer. Thoughts upon thoughts rushed through her mind with a rapidity which forbade a determination. She hesitated—attempted to speak—but was so embarrassed that she could not proceed. All

this Mr. Hollis construed in his favor, and he became more urgent in his protestations, which he continued for some minutes. But Clara had now resumed the command of herself. She expressed her sense of his merits as a gentleman, and sensibility to the preference he had avowed ; and concluded with saying, " that she required time for reflection before she could give a final answer." This was certainly not so much as Mr. Hollis expected ; still, part of the language in which it was couched, might be considered as encouraging. But, embarrassed himself to a considerable extent, and his pride somewhat aroused, at the indecisive manner in which his offer had been met, he expressed somewhat haughtily his acquiescence in her present determination. He then added, " I am under the necessity, Miss Sydenham, of setting off for Virginia in the morning, and shall be absent two weeks. At the expiration of that period, I will wait upon you for your decision, which, permit me to hope, will be favorable." Taking up his hat, he bowed and went on to the Capitol.

He had reached the stairs, when he met Charles Leslie. They raised their hats to each other, and passed on. A few minutes sooner, and those three persons, so singularly situated, would have met together. The scene between the two who were now to meet, was to be one of no common interest.

As Charles entered, he saw that Clara was alone, and that she was evidently agitated. He was at no difficulty to account for it, from Hollis's visit ; and with the precipitancy usual with jealousy, attributed it to the engagement which, he believed, she had just made. There was little

time for reflection, for he was under the necessity of speaking to her, and what was uppermost in his mind, it was a thing of course with him, would be brought forward. "I fear," said he, "that I have timed my visit this morning badly, as I saw a gentleman leave you, agitated, as well as I can judge, as much as you yourself are just now."

In the tumult of emotions in which Clara was at the moment involved, this speech was most unfortunate. He had asserted a mutual agitation between Hollis and herself, and thus implied a mutual engagement. The manner, too, in which Charles addressed her, though arising in fact from his feelings, appeared to her to be trifling with her own. Her pride was instantly in movement. The only discordant note in her fine character had been struck violently.

"Then, Mr. Charles Leslie," said she petulantly, "you saw a gentleman."

"And an Infidel," he promptly replied. Fixing his eyes upon her, he added, "I had supposed, that a gentleman who, it is well known, was refused by a lady of high distinction in Virginia, on account of his infidel opinions, just before he came on to Congress, would hardly have met so ready an acceptance of his offering at your shrine;—and that too, without the advice of your mother."

Clara, who had heard this report, only became more piqued, that Charles should have mentioned it. The cool manner in which he spoke, increased likewise her irritation, and the reference to Mrs. Sydenham's ignorance of her conduct, raised it to its full height.

"Mr. Leslie," said she, meeting his look as fixedly as his own, "it is a long time that you have taken the liberty to

make remarks and censures upon my deportment, and I have often told you how disagreeable it is to me. I must now tell you, that as I see there is no probability you will cease it, it would be agreeable, that you cease your visits to me altogether."

Charles stood motionless for a few moments, his eyes still fixed upon the proud girl. At length he recovered himself.

"It shall be so," he said, while his voice betrayed the instantaneous emotions produced by so unlooked-for a repulse. "It shall be so. That I have violently offended you, though unintentionally on my part, I see; but it is now due to my own character, to explain myself as to the part which I have hitherto acted. That I have long loved you, you must have known; but how truly I have loved you—how anxiously I have watched your conduct, in the hope that I should see you at last superadd to so great personal attractions as you possess, those still more lovely and enduring of a mind influenced by religious views and hopes, of all this you knew nothing. You may consider this acknowledgment as no excuse for my conduct, but your generosity, I trust, will admit it as an extenuation of my offence, and cause you to think, in a calmer moment, that the wretchedness which this attachment has produced, had no need to be increased by the harshness of your expressions. I leave you then, as you bid me; but hear me for the last time. If your case be not desperate—if the Divine Goodness be not exhausted towards you—be you sure that the furnace of affliction will yet be kindled for you, and the dross that now alloys so much that is beautiful in your

character, will at last be consumed. Farewell," he added, with increasing emotion ; and taking her hand, and bending low over it, and pressing it passionately to his lips, she felt a burning tear fall upon it. Turning quickly, he rushed to the door.

" Charles—Charles !" she cried, but he heard her not, and was gone.

She sat for some moments, motionless ; absorbed in the thoughts, and feelings, and results, which one short hour had brought to bear upon her destiny. Within that period, she had been addressed by one man of elevated standing in society, and had been assured of the attachment of another whom she had long respected, and whom she had now driven from her in a moment of irritation. But the events had followed each other with such rapidity—they induced such a tumult of thoughts—and were so powerfully to affect her happiness, that she was not able so to fix her mind as to follow up the consequences. She retired to her own room, which fortunately for her, was unoccupied, and gradually her ideas settled into a more regular train ; her position was clear before her, and she saw distinctly that she was now called upon to decide a matter upon which depended all her happiness, for earth certainly, and it might be, for heaven also. To make the climax of her difficulties, she had no hope of Charles Leslie. She herself had told him to cease his visits, and she knew him too well to think for a moment that he would lower himself by repeating his attentions. Her acceptance of Mr. Hollis, was then the ground upon which the battle was to be fought.

Pride, as usual, was the first to enter the lists. " Charles

Leslie's language to me was too bad," she cried. "Mr. Hollis's offer was readily accepted by me, he says, though rejected by a lady in Virginia, but the other day; and I am warned as to his infidel opinions. And am I to bear to be told, that I am ready for an offer as soon as it is made? And am I to be considered as a mere child, not capable of judging how far a man's principles might conduce to my happiness? And then I am plainly charged with disrespect to my mother! This interference with my concerns, and censure of my conduct, is what no woman ought to submit to, and I was right in dismissing him in the manner I did."

Then she would reverse the picture and look at it. "I have then," she thought, "driven from me a man whom I have known and respected for years—who has loved me long and truly—to an union with whom I once looked forward with a firm belief that his principles could be safely relied upon to secure my happiness. And for what have I done this? Has he told me anything of Mr. Hollis that I was not well aware of before? Have I no reason to fear in trusting my happiness to a man so utterly destitute of religious principle? Have I not known in others, the misery thus caused? Certainly, too, it was my duty to have apprized my mother before I suffered Mr. Hollis to go so far as he has; and yet my pride, aroused the instant that Charles Leslie spoke to me, has overborne everything—has lost me the only man who, I now see, ever loved me as I ought to be loved—who was not so blind that he could not see my faults, nor so dishonest as to be silent when he did! And yet I have told him to leave me; and told him

so in harsh and insulting language !” Her eye then rested upon the hand which he had pressed so passionately to his lips, and she burst into tears. “No, Charles,” she cried, “no ; though my hopes that our fates will ever be united, are feeble indeed, yet never—never shall mine be united to another’s. My respect and affection are yours entirely, and shall lie buried in the ruins of my peace, nor eye nor ear shall invade the sanctuary of the deep—deep desolation !”

In this noble-minded girl, the triumph was as complete as the contest was severe. Pride, the sole defect in her fine character, was defeated by a sound judgment and sensitive heart, and a decision once thus made, was sure to be unchangeable. The tumult of passions that had agitated her so violently for the day, subsided ; and little of the internal conflict she had sustained, could be observed the next morning, other than a shade of sadness which every now and then overcast a countenance heretofore constantly lighted up with grace and animation. The blow struck at her master passion had only made her more lovely and interesting, while a new incident was about to add strength to her decision.

Charles Leslie had left Clara, in a state of excessive agitation from the violent blow which his feelings had received in a dismissal as insulting, as it was unexpected. He knew nothing, of course, of the conflicts of mind which she was under at the time he spoke to her, and he could not therefore fully appreciate her behavior towards him. Under such view as he could take of it, it confirmed his worst fears of the effects which he had always dreaded, that Washington would produce upon her mind and character. But with

the principle of submission to the Divine providence, which he had laid down for his government, he bowed to the stroke with humility, though suffering from it severely. He had been sitting for some time to the celebrated Stuart, that great master of his art, for his portrait, which he intended to send to his mother as soon as completed, for which three sittings more only were required. During the week following his last interview with Clara, it was finished, and hung up in the great artist's room in Pennsylvania Avenue, amongst other efforts of his pencil, and on the right side of the door by which visitors were admitted.

One day of the week following Mr. Hollis's departure for Virginia, the party at Vanderhorn's had just risen from the breakfast table, and reached the drawing-room, when Mr. O'Connor entered in his usual flow of spirits. "And this is a day, sure, ladies dear," said he, "that we have a holiday for Congress; and so plaise come, and get under my big cloak, and go and see how handsome Mither Stuart has made me look upon canvas. Indeed, and I looked five times, before I could find out it was myself, sure." There was no resisting Mr. O'Connor's good humor and gentlemanly bearing at any time, and the three girls were soon in readiness. A few minutes' walk brought them to Stuart's. The attention of the party was first occupied by Mr. O'Connor's portrait, which hung opposite to the door by which they had entered; then by those of the two beautiful Miss Barrys of the city; when the entrance of another party drawing her attention to the door, Clara first saw Charles's portrait. There was the countenance, though tinged with sadness—the expression—the perfect

resemblance which that great master of his art only could then give. Gazing for one moment intently upon it, the next, she covered her eyes, as if to shut out the sight of something insupportable to her feelings. She then looked at her hand, as if to discover the burning tear which had fallen upon it, forgetting that she had her glove on. Their last parting—his last look upon her—his passionate pressure of her hand—his warning voice faithful to the last to her happiness, though she had blasted his own—were all vividly before her, gave additional force to her attachment, and caused her to feel more bitterly than ever the separation she had made.

It was with difficulty that she retained command of her feelings while the party remained in the room. Fortunately, the girls were so much amused by Mr. O'Connor's lively remarks, that they did not observe her, and she thus escaped an addition to her pain which would have been caused by it.

True to his word, Mr. Hollis made his appearance at the breakfast-table, on the morning he had fixed for his return. Knowing that the gentlemen of Congress would retire to their rooms, and thence go to the House, he wended his way to the drawing-room; a thought passing through his mind that Clara had gone there to receive him. Upon opening the door, he found himself mistaken. He then touched the bell, and a servant appearing, he sent his respects and asked permission to see her. Clara soon came down. He scrutinized her closely as she advanced towards the fireplace and took her seat; but his penetration was utterly at fault to discover anything by her manner,

from which he could learn his fate. It was necessary, then, that he should begin where he had left off. Taking his seat near her, "I am faithful to my engagement, as to my return, you see, Miss Sydenham," said he. "May I now hope that I shall receive your acceptance of the offer I made when I had last the pleasure to be with you?"

"I have given to the subject, Mr. Hollis," replied Clara, "the consideration which is due to it; and while I profess myself sensible to your favorable opinion, must inform you at the same time, that there are circumstances which compel me to decline your offer."

The Virginian was upon his feet in a moment.

"Permit me to remark, Miss Sydenham," said he, "that your behavior towards me, authorized me to expect a very different answer; and I ask to be informed what circumstances they are to which you refer. I may be able, in an explanation, to set them aside."

"I answer to the first, Mr. Hollis," she replied, "that gentlemen are too prone to place upon female behavior a construction which it ought not to bear in justice; to the second, that it may be due to yourself, I should tell you candidly, that my affections are engaged to another." A deep blush which suffused her whole face and neck, confessed to the truth of her acknowledgment.

But this proud man, ignorant of the character he had to deal with, now lost the bearing of the gentleman, in the resentments of the discarded suitor. He stepped back a few paces from Clara, and fixing his eyes upon her, which almost flashed fire,—“May I ask further, Miss Sydenham,” said he, with a sneer, “the name of the person thus favored,

and if he is apprized of the honor which you have done him by your preference?"

Clara assumed in a moment, all her dignity.

"In answering you candidly as I did, Mr. Hollis," she replied, "I did it at the expense of my own feelings, considering you as a gentleman. Your last question has convinced me that I was mistaken. No gentleman would have asked it, and no answer will be given to it." Rising from her chair as she was speaking, she bowed slightly as she passed him, and immediately left the room. The next morning it was mentioned at the breakfast-table, that Mr. Hollis had taken lodgings at a fashionable hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue.

"And what is the maneing of all this?" said Mr. O'Connor. "Mrs. Stanley went off, no one knows why; and now Mr. Hollis, after spending the winter with us, off he goes in the spring, without asking any lave of the house, at all, at all. And where is he to find such clever gentlemen, and a bit of an Irishman into the bargain, as I am, sure, and three such pretty young ladies. This is too bad; and Miss Lucy, if you say the word, I will invite him to Bladensburgh, and then bring him back with a bullet in him."

"No, no, Mr. O'Connor," replied Lucy, "it may be that he is wounded already; and besides, I cannot let you run the risk of a bullet yourself. You know what a favorite you are with us all."

"And so I am, sure," said he. "But you only tell me so, because you know that I am twice and a half as old as you are."

Lucy laughed. "That is a mountain indeed, Mr. O'Connor," said she, "that is impassable. But I think that I am bound to help you to another lady, who will suit you better."

"And that is very kind of you, sure, Miss Lucy," replied Mr. O'Connor; "so make haste and tell me who it is."

Lucy put on one of her demurest looks, affecting hesitation in her manner, and then imitating his Irishisms, she replied, "Mrs. Stanley is the lady, sure, Mr. O'Connor: who else ought it to be, at all, at all?"

A burst of laughter followed this announcement. O'Connor joined in it as heartily as any one, and telling Lucy, in parliamentary language, that her bill was laid on the table, went off to his seat in the House.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE spring was now in advance, and as if tired even of excitement itself at last, the company at Washington were breaking off towards every point of our vast Union. Balls and parties had ceased, and dinners, of a family character, rather than as an entertainment, gave note that the interchanges and feelings of friendship were now to be substituted for large and expensive parties. Amongst the citizens of Maryland, who had settled in Washington, was Colonel Beauchamp, of the old army, with his lady, both of them from the same county where the families of the Sydenhams and Leslie's resided, and intimate with both. Clara was in the habit of visiting Mrs. Beauchamp, as an old and valued acquaintance of her mother's. Charles also was intimate in the family, and a great favorite of the colonel, with whom he was never tired with conversing, and drawing from him his recital of the hard-fought battles in the South, in most of which the colonel had been engaged. Mrs. Beauchamp had, by dint of address, and many questions, drawn from Charles an acknowledgment of his long attachment to Clara, though he resolutely refused any information as to their present position towards each other. All she could learn was, that there existed a coolness on both sides. In one of Clara's visits to her, Mrs.

Beauchamp had pressed her to come and dine with her the next day, and Clara had agreed to do so. As she was taking leave, "I should have told you, my dear," said the old lady, "that we shall have no one with us, except indeed, it be Col. Beauchamp's young favorite, Charles Leslie. That will not keep you away, I hope, for he is from your own village, and an acquaintance of your family, I believe." It was too late for Clara to withdraw the acceptance of the invitation she had just given, had she been so disposed, but she was pleased at the course which things had taken, anxiously hoping that something might occur to lead to a renewal of Charles Leslie's attentions. Col. Beauchamp had met him that morning, and had engaged him for the next day, but knew nothing of his lady's invitation to Clara. This was the position of the parties.

Clara went early the next day to the colonel's, and sat for some time conversing with Mrs. Beauchamp, expecting every moment to see Charles enter; but he had been unexpectedly detained much beyond what was usual with him. At length he came in, without being announced, as his intimacy allowed him to do, and to his astonishment, beheld Clara. He stood still for a moment, thoughts rushing through his mind with the rapidity of lightning. "How is this?" he thought. "Has she come, knowing I was to be here, to renew our old friendship? No; she is too proud for that. To aggravate her former insult by repeating it? No; she is too noble for that." But he was compelled to move forward, and say something to her; but so confused was he, that nothing could be more unfortunate than what he did say. Advancing rapidly, as if by a des-

perate effort, he expressed his pleasure at seeing her, and then added abruptly, " But what havoc the dissipation of Washington has made with you ! Why, Clara, you are not half so pretty as you were !" Clara was shocked at this rude speech, which sounded like retaliation for the past, and was worse by far, and more unjustifiable than hers, which so deeply wounded his feelings ; but she was mistress of herself in the emergency, and answered him with her usual grace and good manners. Col. Beauchamp then came in, and the servant entering the room at the same instant, informed Mrs. Beauchamp that dinner was on the table.

Charles Leslie was overwhelmed in the torrent of thoughts and conjectures which rushed upon him. Except twice across the Senate Chamber, he had not even seen Clara, and they had never met, till now, since their unhappy parting at Vanderhorn's. Of her engagement with Hollis he could learn nothing, but as he knew that he had left his lodgings at Vanderhorn's, he was sure that no engagement had ever existed. How was it, then, that he now found her at Col. Beauchamp's ? His embarrassment of manner, however, gradually went off, as he performed the civilities of the table, and he was gratified in perceiving that Clara received his attentions with evident satisfaction. By the time they rose from dinner, he found himself in an animated conversation with her, in which she plainly evinced as much pleasure as he did. But another disappointment was at hand. They had hardly reached the drawing-room, before Mr. Sydenham's carriage drove up, and the footman coming to the door, delivered a message to Clara.

She immediately prepared for her departure. Charles offered to arrange her shawl around her ; she suffered him to do it. He took her hand to lead her to the carriage ; she did not withdraw it. He assisted her into it ; she did not object to it. Neither had spoken a word, nor could they. Charles stood by the carriage door, wishing to get into it and see her safe home, but afraid that she would refuse if he asked her permission ; she anxiously hoping that he would, but ashamed to ask him, because she had once told him never to visit her again. Their eyes met, and were riveted on each other, as if with a presentiment that they would not soon meet again. It was raining. The footman came round to put up the steps—then closed the door—the carriage rolled away—and years rolled away also before they ever met again.

The match was not yet made in heaven.

Upon what apparent trifling incidents often depends the happiness or misery of years, and often of life itself ! How utterly uncontrollable the circumstances under which, in our fearful moral probation, we are compelled to submit to the dispositions of an overruling Providence.

As the carriage drove onwards, Clara looked back and saw her lover standing where she had left him, his looks still fixed upon the carriage which held her. It then turned into another street, and she lost sight of him. She was now satisfied, that even the harsh repulse which she had given to him, had not destroyed the deep attachment which he had long felt for her—that his heart was still hers—as she knew that hers was his entirely. But of what avail was all this ? While unlooked-for circumstances brought

them together, others as uncontrollable immediately arose to part them. This last blow was terrible : her agitation became excessive, and throwing herself into one corner of the seat, and covering her face, she burst into tears, and could with difficulty regain her composure by the time the carriage had stopped at her lodgings.

Hope had now vanished. But this was not the furnace which Charles Leslie had told her was to kindle upon her. It was only the first lesson which all in this world of vanity, have to learn—of hopes withered—of keen and bitter disappointment ! And so may it be, till we acknowledge that He who has given to us this our glorious existence, best knows how and when to give us all that can conduce to our happiness ; and proves that the wisdom which is perfect, and the love that is infinite, cannot fail to continue in producing a result so beneficent !

Charles Leslie, when he had lost sight of the carriage, returned to the drawing-room.

“Charles, Charles,” said Mrs. Beauchamp, “how could you be so rude to Clara ? I really am ashamed for you !”

“I am more ashamed for myself, madam,” replied Charles, “than you can be for me, and sorry besides ; but to tell the truth, which is always best, the unexpected sight of her confused me so completely, that I stammered out the first thing I could, and most unfortunately for me, it was neither true nor gentlemanly. There seems to be an overruling power that still keeps us apart.”

It was evident from all that had just occurred, that some great change had taken place in Clara’s mind ; and that her feelings towards Charles Leslie, instead of being de-

stroyed by the dissipation of Washington, had only been increased. Persuaded, now, that such was the case, Charles determined to see her once more, and satisfy himself, by a conversation with her, how far his present opinions and hopes were well founded. Here again, adverse circumstances interposed their usual fatality. Two days passed over, and he had not been able to go to Vanderhorn's ; on the third he was there, and upon inquiring for Mr. Sydenham, was shown to his room. Upon asking for the young ladies, Mr. Sydenham informed him that they had set off for Baltimore on their return home, in company with Mrs. Marchmont, to that place, but an hour before. "I am sorry, my young friend," he added, "that you did not see them before they left the city. The affair in which I have been so much interested for you is in a fair way, and I am authorized to tell you that you will go to Europe with the first dispatches of importance which may be sent to London and Paris. As yet, the time is not fixed. Communications from our Ministers at those courts, announce the constant recurrence of events deeply affecting the interests and honor of our country ; yet so liable to be changed, that definitive instructions cannot hastily be given, whilst also, the next arrival might possibly render them necessary. You will see, then, that you must hold yourself in readiness to set off at a moment's warning ; and as you will need some preparation, I advise you to make it at once, and not to leave the city."

Charles expressed his deep acknowledgment for the interest which Mr. Sydenham had taken in his behalf, and promised to follow his advice implicitly. Much as he

wished to see Clara, and disposed as he was to follow her, he saw that it was out of the question to do so with propriety, after the counsel which Mr. Sydenham had just given him. He had then again to submit to circumstances unexpected as usual, and as uncontrollable. To this was now to be superadded an absence which he was induced to believe might be of long duration, and then, what might happen in one, two, or even three years? But reflections like these had no tendency to quiet his harassed feelings, which were now more excited than ever they had been, and he drew to his aid his strong principle of submission to the Divine government, and commenced his preparations for his departure. This, however, did not take place so soon as he had been led to expect. Month after month passed away, but the Government had not yet decided upon its measures. Persons yet living, may remember that eventful period when our relations with Great Britain were threatening to end the long peace with which we had been blessed, and the agitation and intense anxiety which spread over the Union. Everything portended war, and the Government anxiously labored to prevent it by negotiations and offers to the two great belligerents, whose blows at each other fell also upon nations whose interest and policy was peace with both. It was not then till late in the first year of the new administration of Mr. Madison, that Charles Leslie received the Government Dispatches, with orders for his departure for New York, and to take passage from that port for Europe.

He accordingly set off immediately. Upon his arrival at New York, he found the vessel in which his passage had

been engaged, detained by adverse winds. Clara was ever present to his thoughts. The circumstances which had so repeatedly arisen to part them, seemed now to have effected a long, perhaps a final separation. With his mind filled with these thoughts, he determined, the night before he sailed, to write to her, believing that in thus giving expression to his own feelings, it would not be without its effect upon hers.

Charles Leslie to Miss Sydenham.

"Your father, no doubt, has informed you long since, that I was to receive orders from the Government, with dispatches for our Ministers in London and Paris. You will see that I date from New York. We sail in the morning. On the eve of a departure from our country, for a time, the duration of which is uncertain, and which I shall not be able to shorten as I might myself wish, I have ventured to address you. I should indeed have infringed your prohibition, to cease my visits to you, and have followed you to Baltimore, but that Mr. Sydenham counselled me not to leave Washington.

"You have told me that I was harsh and unkind in my remarks upon your behavior. You may have considered me as presumptuous in my long and deep attachment to you. The first, I may have been, for my feelings were always too strong upon such occasions, to be under my control. For the latter, I must plead, that with all your failings, as I considered them, had I not seen much to respect, to esteem, to love, I had long since ceased even to think

of you. But knowing you as I do—respecting you as I do—loving you as I ever shall ; to cease to be interested for your happiness,—be where I may on earth, was, is still, and will be, impossible. Forgive then, the past ; and now farewell,—noblest of women, farewell. Should it be that another may attract your attention, may you find an attachment as deep, a love as true as that I have felt for you ; but never—never intrust your happiness to one who rejects the Redeemer of the world. And if distress assail you, and hope for this would expire, seek it from Heaven, and believe me, I beseech you, when I tell you, that you will find it ; and as Heaven only can give it, so none can take it away.”

Clara was sitting alone in her room one afternoon, when her servant came in, and handed to her Charles Leslie's letter. Upon reading the first lines, which announced his departure for Europe, she became pale as ashes. As she read on, the blood returned to her face, and suffused it with a deep blush. Pain at the separation which had taken place, was mingled with pleasure at his acknowledgment of his still enduring affection. “Heaven preserve him ;” she passionately exclaimed, clasping her hands together. “Perhaps Heaven may give us to meet again, when I may be more deserving of him than I have been.”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE vessel in which Charles Leslie had taken his berth, made sail the morning after he had written to Clara. After a boisterous passage of forty-five days, he arrived at Liverpool, and taking post immediately, soon reached London, and delivered the dispatches with which he was intrusted. There he was compelled to remain some time, until our Minister had his letters prepared for the embassy at Paris, and could make arrangements by which he could reach that city. But this was no easy matter. The two countries were then engaged in that bloody strife, which was not ended but with the total overthrow of the Emperor, and all direct intercourse was cut off between them. As our own relations with Great Britain were constantly becoming more embroiled, and more threatening in their aspect, our Minister was unwilling to request any favor from her with respect to Charles Leslie's mission, and determined that he should land in the north of Europe, and proceed thence to France. Furnishing him accordingly with the necessary papers, Charles sailed for Hamburg, and thence went on to Paris, and delivered to our Minister at that court, the dispatches which he had received for him at Washington.

More than two years passed away, before all the pur-

poses for which he had visited Europe, were accomplished. At this time also, the near approach of war with Great Britain, which was now seen to be inevitable, warned him that it was high time he should return home. Fortunately for him, he was able, through the influence of our Ambassador at Paris, to obtain a passage in a cartel from Ostend, bound to London. There receiving dispatches for our Government, he took post to Bristol, where a vessel was loading for Baltimore, and in a few days was on the ocean. The voyage was uncommonly pleasant, and on the thirtieth day after leaving England, they saw the Capes of the Chesapeake. When the man at the mast-head announced land in sight, Charles rushed upon deck. "My own dear native land," he cried, "may Heaven preserve you ever from the vice and misery which aristocracy has so strongly bound upon unhappy Europe." A favorable wind carried the ship rapidly up our broad Chesapeake, and in twenty-four hours, she was safely moored in harbor. Charles set off the next morning for Washington.

He found Congress in the session which resulted in the declaration of war against Great Britain. This important decision, which had been finally made, was approved by a large majority of the people, who prepared to meet the consequences with firmness ; while it was violently opposed by a party too prone to sacrifice the honor and interest of their country to their personal resentments, or hopes of personal aggrandizement. The remnant of Federalism, which had still some life left in it, had recourse to all the arts and management with which its leaders were familiar, to turn the popular feeling against the administration ; and losing sight

of the duties which they owed to their country, justified the wrongs which Great Britain had heaped upon us for years. Not content with this, they resisted alike the measures proposed for raising troops, or imposing taxes, and pushed on five of the States to an opposition as unconstitutional as it was devoid of patriotism. The remembrance of these times may be of use to us now, and in future, and in the political changes to which we are subjected, may warn us not to trust any man who pursues his personal ambition at the expense of his country.

The consideration in which Charles Leslie was held by the Government, obtained for him immediate employment at the South, and he was ordered to repair immediately to his station. Whatever personal motives might have operated with him for a delay of some time in his native State, they had to give way to the more important duties which the country now required from all. The sound of war was heard throughout the length and breadth of our vast Union, and our unprepared state everywhere rendered more imperative the instant and strenuous efforts of all engaged in the public service. Delay of course was impossible : he set off immediately, and soon reached the station to which he was ordered.

It would be irrelevant to go into details of our operations during this trying period to our young country, or to advert upon the impolicy of our Government in commencing a war when no adequate preparations had been made to meet it, nor to express mortification at the repeated disgraces which our arms suffered in our first essays upon land. A short time, however, was sufficient to prove, that

the bravery of our people was equal to their firmness, and that the sons, in the second war of Independence, had not degenerated from their fathers in the first. Our blood was poured out like water in the South and West, and left imperishable monuments of valor and patriotism, contrasting brilliantly with the apathy of the North, which could not be aroused, though the enemy had seized upon a part of their territory. Our navy, from the first, showed the high tone of professional character of our gallant officers and seamen, and never failed, when a disastrous defeat on land was announced, to arouse the national spirit by a victory at sea, over our proud enemy. "Modest Isaac Hull," as John Randolph called him, but as brave as modest, and as intelligent as brave, led the way in these brilliant achievements. He was soon followed by others of merit equal to his own; some of whom still live to reap the reward of esteem and respect from their grateful and admiring countrymen, while those who are gone illuminate the page of our history with a blaze which, at some future day, may light others on the same road. As a nation, we were tried by sea and land. As a nation, we stood the trial firmly, and for the reward of our perseverance and bravery, now rank with the first on earth.

During the whole period of the war, Charles Leslie had been actively employed. From his boyhood, when he read of our wrongs as colonists, he had detested the Government which had inflicted them. Devoted to republican institutions, which the old classic writers present in such bright colors to young and ardent minds, he saw, in maturer life, in those of his native land, what far excelled those

of Greece or Rome. The contest, he saw, was between republicanism and aristocracy. If we failed, the latter might wave its black banner over the New World as it had waved it over the Old ; if we stood firm, republicanism might, by the influence of our example, help to redeem the earth from the combined power of kings, priests, and nobles. With these incentives, added to a strong sense of moral duty, Charles Leslie exerted all his powers in the execution of orders transmitted to him from Washington. Duties arduous and important were repeatedly confided to him, and repeated acknowledgments from the Government, of the fidelity, promptitude, and efficiency with which they were performed, showed the high appreciation in which his services were held. Peace, unexpected, but welcome to all, suddenly put an end to the fearful preparations for another campaign, which threatened to waste more human blood than all that had preceded it.

The war was followed by cessation from the toils, privations, and sufferings it had caused to all engaged in it. Business of every kind was resumed with the energy peculiar to our countrymen, and commerce soon gave to the Government an increase of revenue, vast in amount, and established our credit upon the firmest basis. The people of the United States, elated with the manner in which our sailors and soldiers had, a second time, met the disciplined forces of England in battle, now looked forward to a period when, by the increase of our population, and the development of our resources, we might claim and hold a high position amongst the nations of the earth. What we could do, was now evident, and it was just as much so, that our fu-

ture position was to exact from Europe a justice and a courtesy hitherto denied to our young country.

Several years had now elapsed since Charles Leslie had heard anything of the family of the Sydenhams, other than that he saw in the public papers, the name of Mr. Sydenham still amongst those of the Representatives at Washington, and had been told that his son Frederick, had lost his life by an accident. Beyond this he knew nothing. Long absence from his native State, new scenes, new associations, much business, and many years, all combined to produce somewhat of their usual effect. The possibility of an union with Clara, though still recurring to his mind, and as often cherished when it came, had yet been weakened by the many circumstances under which he had been placed. Their repeated separations too, at the moment when an explanation seemed to be certain, as he looked upon them as providential, so he had resigned himself to them. A strange circumstance, was now to excite his interest in her, with all the energy with which a first and deep attachment in youth, though it may be weakened for a time, is so sure to return.

Some time after peace was proclaimed, Charles found himself residing in New Orleans, his room situated opposite to Maspero's coffee-house. It was his custom to read late at night, having found in Bayles' great dictionary, a fund of information which seemed inexhaustible. All that man ever thought or ever acted, seemed to be comprised in that celebrated work. Of course he became deeply interested in it. But his thoughts in sleep, instead of receiving their impressions from what had so much engaged him

when awake, were of a different character altogether. He dreamed incessantly of Clara Sydenham. At first this did not strike him in the least as a matter to be thought of. It was a dream, and he let it pass for a dream ; but it returned so often, that at last, waking up suddenly one morning, he exclaimed, "What can all this mean ? My thoughts of her when awake do not account for why her form, her features, should be thus constantly before me in my dreams ? Why we should be interchanging thoughts and emotions, as if our attachment had never known interruption ? It is very—very strange, and I cannot account for it."

About two weeks after this, the servant ushered a gentleman into his room, whom Charles was acquainted with in Baltimore, and who, he was aware, could give him all the information he desired respecting his relatives and friends in Maryland.

"I am heartily glad to see you, Saunders," said Charles. "You have come down by the way of the river, I find, from the work the mosquitos have done upon your face. What has brought you to this country of sugar and cotton and yellow fever ? Sit down : I have a thousand inquiries to make of my relatives and friends. It is a long time since I passed a month in old Maryland."

Conversation now followed. "Yes ; I was informed," said Charles, "of my mother's death, before I left England. Indeed, when I last saw her, I was aware that her age and infirmities left little hope that I should ever see her again on earth. How forcibly the loss of the last parent strikes upon the heart of the last child ! How unavailing our regrets ! But there is another and a better world. But my

uncle James; tell me, Saunders, does the old man yet live?"

"He does," replied Mr. Saunders, "and with the respect and attachment of all who know him."

"That it would be so, if he were alive, I never doubted. No man of his generation has more adorned Christianity by his example or been more extensively useful in his profession. May mercy and peace be multiplied to him. But tell me, where does Mr. Sydenham reside now, and what has befallen his family?"

"Mr. Sydenham," replied Mr. Saunders, "has retired to his farm, where he now lives, with Mrs. Sydenham and Miss Clara. Miss Agnes died four years since."

"Agnes dead!" said Charles. "So young—so beautiful! This is sad indeed. What a world this is of misery or of disappointment! Frederick, too, I learn, is gone. But Clara,—is she married?"

"No," replied Saunders, "and no likelihood of it, that I have heard of. She has lived in great retirement for a long time. Distresses in the family, of a pecuniary nature, arising out of security which Mr. Sydenham gave for others, then Miss Agnes' death, and after that, Frederick's, all combined to press heavily upon her. She is rarely to be seen anywhere except at church, and it was there I last saw her, about six months since. Her features and form remain the same, I think, as when you last parted with her; though the first are constantly overcast with a settled melancholy, and she is perhaps thinner than formerly. This account will prepare you for what I have now to tell you. She is become very religious."

Charles Leslie started. "What is it you say? Clara Sydenham become very religious! Is it possible?"

"It is not only possible, but certain," replied Mr. Saunders. "Why, you yourself, I thought, must have known the dreadful state of mind she was in, before she joined the church, and which she informed you of, in the letter she wrote to you."

"The letter she wrote to me, Saunders, and on that account!" said Charles. "What on earth are you talking about? I never received any letter; I never even heard of it before this moment."

"It is all true, notwithstanding," replied Mr. Saunders, "for it was talked about a long while, and the letter, there is no doubt, must have been read by several persons. Aye! now I understand it, I think. The letter, as I was told, was addressed to you at Charleston, and probably, sent to the post-office, a few miles distant from Mr. Sydenham's. The servant either lost it, or it was stolen from the office, and thus fell into the hands of some unprincipled wretch, who made this dishonorable use of it. But enough of this, if you please, at present," he added. "I am here unexpectedly, and unwillingly. My business relates neither to 'sugar nor cotton,' and I should be very sorry that the yellow fever, the constant visitor of this city, should find me here, and acclimate me, as I think you call it. My wish and request is, that you will attend to the settlement of the affair which has brought me down, and which I will explain to you. It is neither intricate nor troublesome, and will engage your time and attention for a short time only. Reports that the fever is amongst the flat-boats from the

West, have alarmed me, and as a vessel is on the point of leaving this port for Baltimore, I wish to seize the opportunity of a passage in it."

"Certainly," said Charles; "it will be a pleasure to me to be of any service to you in my power. Let me know in what way I can do it."

Mr. Saunders proceeded immediately to an explanation of his business, and leaving the necessary papers with his friend, rose from his seat, and offering Charles Leslie his hand, "I must bid you now farewell," he said; "this will be my first voyage to sea, and I must make some preparation for it, especially for defence, I am told, against the mosquitos, in descending the river. But tell me, when do you expect to visit old Maryland?"

"You may say, that probably it will be very soon," replied Charles.

Charles, after seeing his friend to the street door, returned to his own room, and threw himself into his arm-chair, completely absorbed in the rush of thoughts and emotions which all that Mr. Saunders had just told him, was so calculated to produce. The coincidence of time, and the information itself so quickly following the impressions of Clara, so lately and so strangely made upon his mind, could not but agitate him excessively. He sat a long while immovable, lost in deep thought, recalling to his recollection her form, her features, their many hours of intercourse, and her last and fixed look, when they last parted. "Is this then the hand of Providence now manifested?" he exclaimed, starting from his seat and pacing the floor. "It may be so. Information so strangely given of the letter

she wrote to me—impressions of her so often and so forcibly compelling my attention—the certainty that she has adopted a religious course, it would be wonderful indeed, if after all, what of life may be left for both of us, should be passed together. Anyhow, she shall have the offer of it.”

He took his resolution to return to Maryland the first opportunity. In a week afterwards, having dispatched Mr. Saunders’s business, he took passage in the ship Cumberland, then loading, and bound for Philadelphia. The vessel in a run of twenty days, cast her anchor near the lazaretto, and a steamboat coming down early in the morning, gave to him an opportunity of going on to Baltimore immediately, and the evening of the same day found Charles Leslie in that city.

His inquiries respecting the family of the Sydenhams, confirmed all that Mr. Saunders had mentioned ; and Charles lost no time in the execution of the purpose which had brought him to Maryland. Taking passage in the packet which made her trip regularly once a week, he was the next morning set ashore in the small boat, at the lower end of Mr. Sydenham’s garden. The old family servant took his baggage, but had forgotten him. Charles followed him to the house. “ How strange it is to me,” he thought, “ to find myself here ; and stranger still the purpose, interrupted for years, that has brought me ! We meet then once more, and now she will be mine, or we are indeed parted forever !” He was now in the drawing-room, where Mrs. Sydenham met him, but how changed ! Time and trouble had made sad havoc with her appearance, but had dimin-

ished nothing of her fine manners or affectionate feelings. After the first expressions of pleasure at meeting again, both were silent for some time—thoughts of the past, never to return—of friends to be seen no more on earth—engrossed them entirely. Mrs. Sydenham at length spoke. “You find us, Charles,” she said, “in a very different situation from that in which you knew us long since. I have known much sickness and much wretchedness since I last saw you. Agnes’ death was a heavy blow, and the loss of Frederick since—both together have pressed upon us all with a heavy weight indeed. Clara is all that is now left us. She is so greatly changed you will hardly know her. She rode to town a few hours since, and I am expecting her return every moment.” Mr. Sydenham here came in, and received Charles with great cordiality. He had much to inquire of him respecting his movements, since they parted last at Washington; and expressed to Charles the high gratification he felt from the manner in which he knew his services were appreciated by the Government. Charles, on his part, expressed his gratitude to Mr. Sydenham for his influence, through which he well knew it was, that he had been employed.

“In thanking you, sir,” said Charles, “for what you have done in my behalf, it is a satisfaction to me, indeed, to hear you say that I have not disgraced your recommendation.”

Clara had been to the neighboring village, and was now returning in company with her cousin, Miss Lacy, with whom she was conversing, when the carriage stopped at the door. Turning her face at the moment towards the

house, "Gracious heaven!" she exclaimed, "there is Mr. Leslie."

"Do you know me, Clara?" he asked. She made no answer, but by holding out her hand to him, as she still sat in the carriage. He assisted her out, and they walked onwards to the house, neither uttering a word. With Charles the hopes of years would now be realized, or blasted forever. With Clara, the sudden surprise at seeing him in so unexpected a manner, was mingled with pleasure at meeting him again. With both, the feelings of years were compressed into the moment which again saw them together.

The day was now gone and the evening far advanced. "You reject me, then, Clara," said Charles, after a long conversation. "At the first moment that was possible to me, within a single week after I heard of your religious views, I hastened to you. You know how long I loved you, and how truly. Refuse not a heart so long devoted to you. Beloved as lovely; are we not now of the same faith, with the same hope, travelling the same road to our Father's house? I will strive to help you forward, and you can help me. Disappoint not the hope which your adoption of a religious life has, at last, suffered me to cherish."

To this passionate appeal he could obtain no answer but a mournful dissent, expressed by a movement of her head, accompanied by floods of tears. Charles pressed his suit again and again, by every motive he could think of. Clara talked with him freely upon other subjects, but when he touched upon their union for life, the same mournful movement of her head, the same floods of tears, attested the bit-

terness of some internal strife which was agitating her thus cruelly. The servant at length showed Charles to his room.

He took off his coat, and threw himself across the bed. To sleep was out of the question. The affair in which his feelings and his happiness had been so long deeply interested, appeared still to be involved in a mystery which he was unable to penetrate. Day broke, and found him in the same position. Aroused by the first streaks of dawn which came through the blinds of the windows, it became necessary that he should decide upon his course. "I have once more, then," he said as he arose, "seen that graceful form ; that face, now chastened in its expression, by sorrow and suffering, but more interesting than when lighted up with all the gayety of youth ; I have pressed her lips to mine for the first time, and it is to be the last. What strange mystery hangs over this affair ! But she rejects me. Heaven knows what is best for us both, and the will of Heaven be done. Thus I began, and thus will I end. I will leave Mr. Sydenham's in the morning."

"Will you be so kind, sir," said Charles to him, an hour after breakfast, "as to let Harry take me to town this morning ? I must see my old uncle before I return, and I can get a conveyance thence to his house."

Charles, at this moment, was standing by Clara's chair. "You must not go," she said in a low voice, pointing to a seat near her. Mr. Sydenham, at the same time pressing his stay, Charles agreed to do so.

In the course of a long conversation, during the day,

"Clara," said Charles to her, "will you tell me one thing I am very desirous of knowing?"

"What is that?" she inquired.

"During our long intercourse, has it ever been, that I had any interest in your affections?"

"You had," was the answer.

"And yet," said he, "though there were times when I hoped it was so, I never remained long satisfied. True love, I see, is a fastidious inmate, ready enough to appreciate to its fullest value, the object beloved, but quite as ready, for that very reason, to depreciate what it has to offer in exchange. I always thought you deserved much more than I had to give."

"I did not think so," she replied. "You know nothing I find, of what passed at Vanderhorn's after that wretched morning when I last saw you there. In accepting Mrs. Beauchamp's invitation to dinner, for she had told me that you would be at her house, I hoped that some circumstances might arise to lead to an explanation. The manner in which you first spoke to me, banished that hope for the moment, and the unexpected early arrival of the carriage, afforded no further opportunity. But why did you not go with me to General Thompson's? How ardently I was hoping you would!"

"And how ardently I was wishing to do so," said Charles, "but thought that you would be offended if I got into the carriage of my own motion, and there I stood in the rain, hoping you would invite me. I behaved very badly that day; but the truth is, that having no idea that I should meet you at dinner, for I had no intimation what-

ever that you had been invited, the unexpected sight of you threw me into such confusion that I knew neither what I said nor did, at the moment. I had hoped, during dinner, that perhaps I had not offended you past forgiveness; but as soon as the carriage was announced, I thought I saw plainly that you had come to show you could pay the respect which you considered as due to an old acquaintance of your mother, and at the same time prove, by your early departure, that you cared nothing for the company which she had invited."

"Nothing of all this was the fact," she replied. "The arrival of the carriage at so early an hour, was a mistake of the servant. But I see plainly, that Divine Providence ordered it all. As the carriage went on, I looked back, and saw you standing where I had left you. When it turned into another street and I lost sight of you, it was a bitter moment; but I will not tell you what I felt. It was necessary, no doubt, that it should be so; and as much so that I should pass through great trials and distresses. The furnace you told me of was soon to be kindled for me, and oh! how fiercely it burned! Charles, Charles—you know not what I have suffered." Clara burst into tears.

"And with this sweet acknowledgment," said Charles, "can it be that you reject me? And is our next parting to be really forever? Dearest and loveliest, I again ask you, to confide to my keeping, the happiness of your life, more precious to me, by far, than all this world can offer."

"My mother," was all she could say, as deeply affected, her head fell upon his shoulder.

"I understand you," said Charles, "but there need be no

separation from her. I have business at Washington which will engage me for a considerable time, nor indeed, is it probable that I shall continue in the public service much longer, under any circumstances. Will that do, dearest? Say that you will be mine. You will not answer? Then tell me by one look of confidence—may I say of love.”

She cast her dark eyes upon him, and he pressed her to his heart, in one long—long embrace.

“Charles,” said Clara to him the next morning, “I wish you would not use some expressions to me that you do. You may call me ‘dearest’ as often as you please, for I like that; but pray do not say ‘loveliest,’ any more. You see how old I look. You know that you told me, the last time I saw you, that I was not half so pretty as I was, and now you talk to me, as if I were prettier than ever.”

“And so you are,” replied Charles. “You have the same dark eye—the same features and expression—chastened, it is true, by all you have suffered, but only adding to your loveliness.” Clara here raised her hand as if to stop him, but seizing it, and pressing it passionately to his lips, “besides, dearest,” he added, “you possess now the greatest charm of all, ‘the beauty of holiness.’ But come, give me your company for a walk. The weather is delightful; exercise and air will be of service to you, and will bring back the rose to your cheek.”

Clara went out for her hat, and returning in a few moments, placed her arm within his.

“It is a long while, Charles,” she said, “since we rambled together; but often and often have I trod the path, along which I am about to lead you, attended by Ann,

whom you see now running after me. For months, during which I suffered such mental agonies, I was accustomed to take this path until it comes to the water; then following the shore for half a mile, a slight elevation of ground is seen, and upon it, five large oaks. Upon a projecting root of one, I was used to sit. It is a spot almost sacred to me. But come along, you must see it."

A few minutes more brought them to the place. The elevation of the ground, though not great, was sufficient to enlarge the beautiful prospect which spread out before them. The oaks were the growth of more than a century—close together, of great height, and of the thickest foliage to be seen upon that noblest tree of our American forests. For sixty feet around their trunks, was spread a verdant turf, here and there enamelled with the violet and white clover; while still further outwards, the wild honeysuckle and sweet-brier, growing in profusion and in full bloom, flung their fragrance to the air. The eye ranged over a vast expanse of water, formed by an indent of the Chesapeake; on the western shore, high hills appeared in the distance, on the eastern, the flat surface peculiar to it, seen through the mist; while clouds of square-rigged vessels from abroad, and the bay craft, whitened the water with their sails, as they bore to our great port, the products of foreign countries, or of our own. The waves struck the shore with gentle undulations, filling the ear with their soft and soothing murmur.

"How very beautiful!" said Charles, as his eye took in the whole view before him.

"It is so," replied Clara, "but it is not that which so en-

deared it to me. It was here that I was accustomed to come and sit with our poor Frederick, and here I returned so often, to indulge my grief for his loss. It became at last so much a habit with me, that I rarely omitted a visit to it, unless the weather prevented me. Under what different circumstances am I now here !”

“Different indeed, dearest !” said Charles, “and ever adored be that power and goodness which have thus permitted it. But sit down on your old seat ; there is room for us both, I see, and give me an account of all that you have passed through, since we last met ; and especially of those exercises of mind through which you found the peace that God only can bestow.”

They seated themselves accordingly, Clara’s hand clasped in his, while Ann busied herself in collecting nosegays of the flowers which were growing around.

“Do you remember, Charles,” Clara began, “the morning we parted at Vanderhorn’s, when I behaved so badly to you ?”

“Remember it,” he replied ; “how could I ever forget it ? Accuse yourself of nothing upon that occasion. I had no right to take you to task so severely, for I was more to blame than you were, and your reproof was what I deserved. But it almost distracted me. I needed for a long time, all the religious principle I could draw upon, to sustain myself under it ; and though the disappointment which I then considered as final, was submitted to as a dispensation of Providence, still it was severe indeed.”

“I was about to tell you,” said Clara, “it was from that I date the commencement of the new views I began to

have of life. I saw, that in a moment of irritation, and from feelings, which my pride whispered to me, you had causelessly wounded, I had driven you from me forever. This brought before me the real state of my affections for you ; and hopeless as my attachment was, this knowledge induced, a few days after, a prompt rejection of Mr. Hollis."

"Is it possible !" said he, interrupting her. "But it was nobly done, and like yourself. I never heard this before, though both my observation and inquiries, in which jealousy prompted me to no little diligence, led me at last to believe it ; though I never thought it had been induced by any preference for me. But, go on."

"My attachment for you," she continued, "founded upon my respect for your character, forbade the possibility of my union with another, while my feelings remained as they were. But hope, as it regarded you, was dead within me. True, it revived for a moment at Colonel Beauchamp's, but the immediate disappointment that followed, destroyed it again. I had, by this time, known enough of Washington, to be fully disgusted with it ; and Agnes and myself left it for Baltimore, in company with Mrs. Marchmont, upon our return home. My father told us subsequently, that you had called to see us, but an hour after we had set off, and this was some relief to me ; but as he told us also, that you were soon to sail for Europe, I sank still deeper in gloom. I received your letter from New York with an emotion which I cannot describe, and have kept it to this hour. How often have I read it, and re-read it ! Satisfied now of your attachment, my mind sunk into resignation at the

state, in which I had some indistinct ideas, Divine Providence had placed me. Further than this, I had, as yet, no knowledge of religion. What you had frequently said upon this subject, often recurred to my recollection ; but I had not been brought to see the necessity of it, as a rule of conduct, or as a source of happiness. But circumstances were rapidly hastening this. The first was, Agnes' death. The insidious and fatal disease, which finally tore from me that gentle and lovely sister, assumed its usual appearance, sometimes threatening a speedy termination of her life, and then again flattering us with the hope of her speedy recovery. My mind was thus harassed and distressed for two years. At last, the blow so long uplifted, fell ; and I need not say how heavy it was. The long continuance of her illness, however, and its fatal conclusion, were not without their salutary effect upon myself. Death, as I saw, was certain for all, and possible even for the young. A deep gloom now fell upon me. To find myself cut off in a moment, from the society of her with whom I had passed so many happy days, was dreadful. Everything reminded me of Agnes. Then again would return thoughts of the deep, dark grave, which must finally receive us all ; then of that other world revealed to us in the Scriptures. My distress increased, but I was yet far indeed from knowing that greater depth to which I was to sink. I had once heard you describe your own exercises of mind to my mother, and remembered your solemn declaration to her, that we might know our reconciliation with Heaven, and I never forgot it, even in my gayest mo-

ments at Washington. But, strange to tell, I never saw that I was in the very state which you had described."

"The Scriptures, Clara," said Charles, "speak of this. It was the 'light shining in darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not.'"

"I was now wretched, indeed," she continued. "My father's pecuniary embarrassments, arising out of security which he had given for others, who had grossly abused the confidence which he had placed in them, and increased by the distresses arising out of the war, were bearing heavily upon us all. The comforts and enjoyments which we had been accustomed to all our lives, were no longer in our power, and it became necessary that resources which my father hitherto had disregarded, should be made available, if possible. To accomplish this, my brother was sent to the South. Letters from him were received for some months, detailing his progress, and giving hopes of ultimate success, when suddenly they ceased altogether. Week succeeded to week, and we heard nothing; and months then followed, leaving us in this fearful uncertainty. At last, we received intelligence from a gentleman with whom my father had been acquainted in Congress, of his melancholy fate. He had fallen a victim to the climate. Oh! that day! that dreadful day! I shall never forget it. The gloom which had so long hung upon me, now deepened into the very blackness of darkness. Hope for this world there was none; and I turned to look for it from another. The Bible was constantly open before me, and I read it incessantly, with prayer to the Almighty for light. One passage in particular, was of the greatest use to me. 'If

any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.' Here I took my stand, determined to rely upon the promise. And here I will relate to you a fact, which I assure you is true, to prove what a merciful and Almighty influence was thrown around me, when my mind was thus cruelly exercised. There was a gentleman residing with us at the time, a brother of my cousin, whom you saw with me in the carriage; who was in the constant habit of denying the truths of revelation, and ridiculing the facts related in the Scriptures. At first, his words cut like swords; but as often as he began, the passage I have referred to would come up vividly to my mind. Thus I bore the conflict for some days. Though my faith in the Bible could not be overthrown, it was not such but that cavils and objections could make me miserable. But Heaven now interposed for me. Whatever was said, had no longer the slightest effect. Indeed, though I distinctly heard every word that was uttered, they conveyed not one single idea to my mind. I have often thought, with wonder and gratitude, of this instance of the Divine goodness in my unhappy case; and I doubt not that it is very common, in some measure or degree, with the most of those who are seeking reconciliation with God."

"No doubt of it, whatever," said Charles. "The promise is, that 'He will make a way for their escape,' from the temptation. This interposition was indeed glorious; yet, to assert it, is considered as fanaticism or madness by the world, though tens of thousands bear testimony to the truth of it. Your exercises of mind were indeed terrific."

"I have not yet told you the worst," she replied. "Though steadfast in reading the Bible, it seemed to me like a sealed book, all except the passage I have mentioned. Though constantly attempting to pray, I was not able. My distress became greater and greater. Often have I thrown myself upon my bed, in an agony of mind which words cannot describe. To sleep was out of the question; night after night passed away, and I never closed my eyes till the morning. My health was now injured, but it was not regarded for a moment amidst the mental torments which I experienced incessantly. That it was necessary I should pass through all this, I have never doubted, but I have often thought, that if the votaries of what are called innocent pleasures and amusements, must needs know the bitter and protracted distress of mind that I did, what must be the tremendous horrors experienced by those, whose consciences are made to feel the guilt of a life blackened by crimes that debase our nature and dishonor our Creator!"

"I have thought much myself, upon this subject," said Charles. "It is the alienation of the heart from the Supreme and only Good, that induces a lesser or greater degree of misery. 'She that liveth in pleasure,' says the apostle, 'is dead while she liveth.' The language is very strong. The pursuit of pleasure, then, may induce, in the female mind, as great an alienation from God, as the extremes of sensuality may induce in men. 'She is dead while she liveth.' To give life from this terrific state, is indeed a work which none but Omnipotence can effect, and to begin, and carry it on to its stupendous and glorious results, consideration must be produced and continued, until

the soul, feeling its depravity and guilt, and its wretched, lost state, seeks at last, help and reconciliation through the Redeemer of the world."

"So I found it to be," she replied. "But what a struggle! It was while I was in this deep distress, that I wrote to you, addressed to Charleston; where, I saw from the public papers, you were stationed. Perhaps I ought not to have done this, after all that had passed between us; but indeed, I thought of nothing at the time, but how I might obtain some advice in my miserable state. As I never received an answer, I then believed you considered that I had departed from the decorum of my sex."

"Dearest and best," said Charles, interrupting her, "how could you think so hardly of me, for a moment? I never received your letter; it was not even put into the post-office." He then related what Mr. Saunders had told him in New Orleans; and told her also, how this information, and the impressions respecting her so strangely made upon him, had brought him to her. "See then, beloved," he continued, "see the hand, and adore the goodness which, at the best time, can accomplish its purposes. The circumstances have all been too strongly marked, not to compel our belief in an overruling and gracious Providence that has appointed them. This manifestation of the goodness of God, it was our privilege to expect, as His children. He has granted it to us as our Father."

"I see it, and feel it to be so," she replied. "This, then, is Christianity! And oh! how glorious! how perfect in its work upon the soul! how watchful in its providence

over its followers! How is it, Charles, that the whole world does not love it as we do?"

"Ah! dearest," said he, "the world is at enmity with our Lord, 'because its deeds are evil.' I thought, when I first received the knowledge of Christ, by the witness of the Spirit, that I had nothing to do but to declare what I had experienced, and all would believe. A little while, however, was sufficient to convince me of my error. One would laugh, another scoff, and almost all paid no attention to what I said. But proceed."

"This was my state," Clara continued, "when I wrote to you. I continued my search without intermission, but was attended with the most horrible temptations. At one time it was suggested to me, to cease praying; at another self-destruction; but still I resisted, and still sought the Saviour. At length, as I sat one morning in my room, alone, reading a religious book, and never more wretched at any moment of my existence, the witness that God was reconciled through Jesus Christ, was given to me. I passed in a moment from the depth of wretchedness to a height of joy that none can possibly conceive of that have never known it. The evidence of our Lord's presence was as plain to me as any object in nature to my senses. Tears of joy poured from my eyes, while my tongue gave instant and rapturous expressions of gratitude and praise. The first words I uttered were, 'truth—truth.' Charles! Charles! even now, as I am telling you, I feel a measure of that glorious manifestation that I then first knew."

She lifted her sweet face to Heaven, in adoration, cov-

ered with tears. Charles, not less affected, drew her tenderly towards him. Neither could speak for some time.

"Clara," said Charles, at length, "to hear all this from your own lips, is happiness indeed. In our union for life, we both have now 'an anchor sure and steadfast,' by which we may be well able to outride all the storms that can assail us."

"What storms, Charles," she asked, "can now assail me? I know not."

"That they may be few, dearest," he replied, "is what I pray for. But the warfare is not over, for our enemies are not destroyed. 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation,' is the command of our Lord. In our hour of need, we now know to whom we can go, in full confidence of deliverance, for 'we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but who was, in all points, tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He knoweth how to deliver.' The God of our nature must be the God of our salvation. If we abide in him, we need fear nothing. He is as willing as able to deliver; He has died to redeem us; He has told us, 'He has loved us so well, that He will not dwell in the mountain of Sion alone.' He has declared to us, that 'we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.' With this hope, and with the 'earnest' we have of our bright inheritance, we will travel our road together. Fear nothing, dearest; infinite power, wisdom, and love, are all united to bear us safely along."

He raised her from her seat as he was speaking, and drawing her arm within his, they returned to the house, interchanging still the sentiments which the strong bond

of union that unites all believers in Christ, had now made more endearing and engrossing. Death may, indeed, destroy the ties of earth, so wisely intended for the happiness of life, but over that which connects the followers of our Lord, it can have no power. In this world, it is the earnest of our glorious inheritance to come, and we carry it into that blissful state to which the Christian is rapidly hastening, while eternity itself will only serve to increase it.

It was some months since, that business carried me to the residence of my old friends. I had long been on the most intimate terms of friendship with Leslie, which had been increased by many scenes we had passed through together, during the eventful period of the last war with Great Britain. Separated a long distance at the time peace was proclaimed, and that separation continued afterwards by my visits to many parts of Europe, we had not met for years. My wish to see my old friend once more—to talk over old times, became intense. As I approached his residence, I ordered my servant to turn in at the gate, from which his house was about a mile distant. Leslie recognized me as soon as I alighted, and running out to me, gave me one of those cordial receptions which old and tried friends are wont to give. Upon entering the dining-room, I found Mrs. Leslie seated in her arm-chair, but little the worse in her appearance, notwithstanding that nearly thirty years had passed over in her married state. On her lap was a beautiful little girl of three or four years of age.

"Sam, this is my second son, **George**," said Leslie, in his old familiar way, introducing me to an elegant young man of twenty-one or two years of age. "Our eldest, Frederic Sydenham, resides in Baltimore. The little girl that you see on Mrs. Leslie's lap, is his daughter. You will perceive, then, that I am spreading into two bands, like old Jacob; and shall finally be entitled to take the place of honor of you, notwithstanding your right of entrée to the Senate by resolution of that honorable body. I could rate you soundly, even now, for your bachelor propensities, and your indifference to Lucy Fairfax, some thirty years since."

"Pray Charles, stop," I interrupted him. "If I am not spreading out myself into two bands as you are, I am pretty well represented by six nephews, and ten grand nephews and nieces; and this counts very well, I think."

"No, no," he rejoined, "your plea is not a good one. What do you say to it, Clara?"

"I cannot allow it," said Mrs. Leslie; "and indeed, I well remember the report that our friend was in the good graces of Miss Fairfax."

"You see, Sam," said Leslie, "you are cast, but"—

"No more of that, Hal, an thou lov'st me," I replied, interrupting him; then turning the conversation into another channel, we held on a long time, and much to the purpose, as became our years and gravity. In this agreeable manner, a whole week passed away, during which, notwithstanding my bachelor state, I was much edified by the confidence and affection of which I saw constant proofs, and the full testimony, in the lives of my old friends, of the happi-

ness, which, founded upon Christianity, could not fail to perpetuate and increase. It was during this time also, that I got possession of the facts contained in this narrative ; and I assure my readers, that little of the embellishments of fiction are added to the story which I have thus ventured to lay before them.

THE END.

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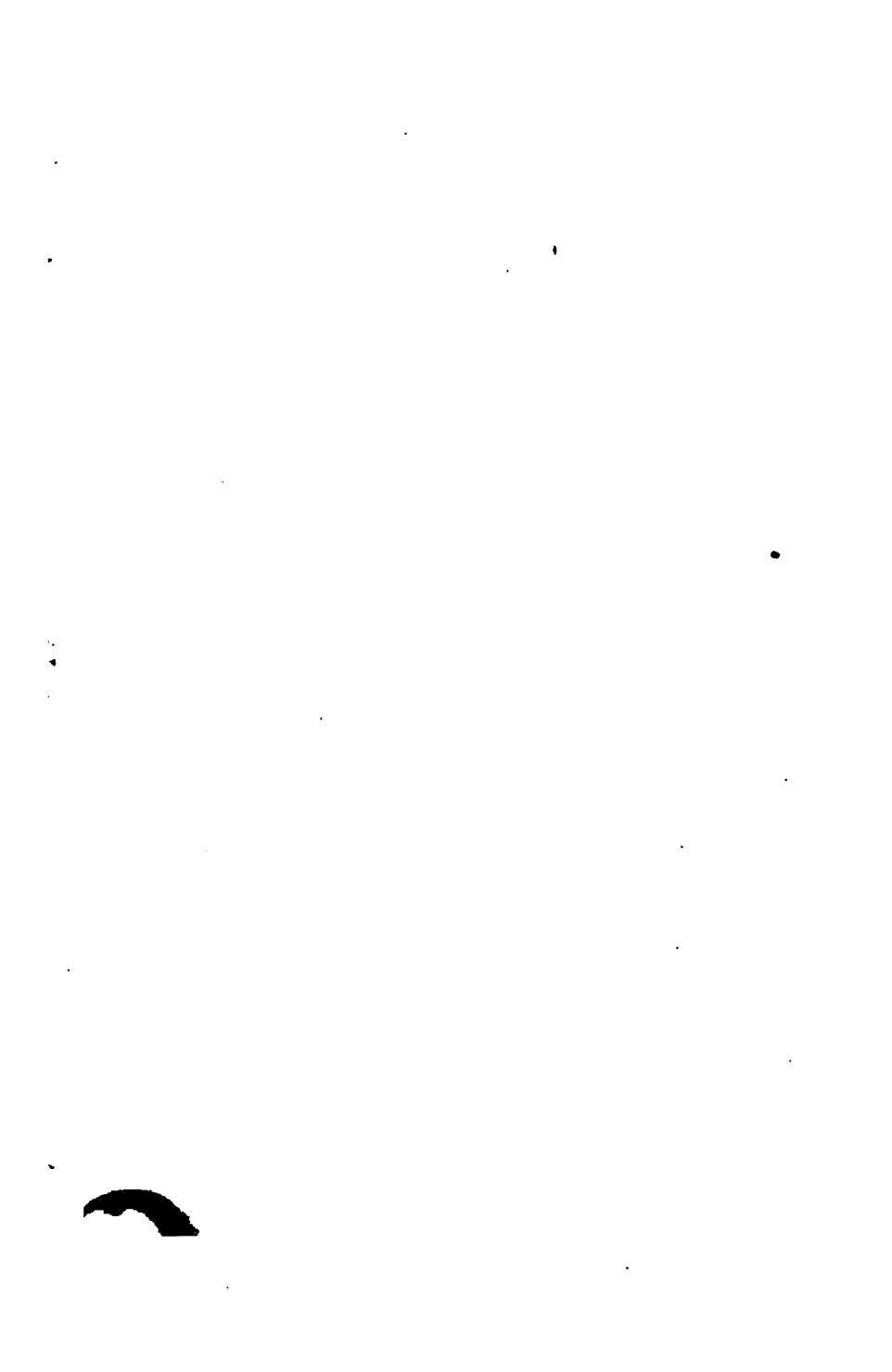
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